GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS

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GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS.

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR.

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SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR.

TWO LECTURES

BY

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PREFACE.

THE first of the following Lectures was delivered four or five times. The second also was written for delivery, although for one reason and another I did not care, when written, to deliver it. I should scarcely have ventured on the subject without the help of Gustav Freytag's *Bilder aus der Deutschen Vergangenheit*, of which interesting book the Chapters on the Thirty Years' War constitute by far the most interesting portion. At the same time, I have drawn my materials from various other quarters as well.

LONDON: *June* 7, 1865.

CONTENTS.

LECTURE I.

PAGE

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS 1

LECTURE II.

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR . 58

LECTURE I.

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS.

FAMILIARITY with great men, and still more with men who were both great and good—with their lives and with their deaths—is among the best antidotes to that littleness and meanness which is ever seeking, and by a thousand avenues, to invade our own lives. To look up, believe me, is a healthy exercise for every one among us. I have one to bring before you this evening, who will demand from you this upward-looking attitude of the mind and spirit. Observe him, I beseech you, as closely as you can. What little I can seize of the actual man as he lived and moved, I will endeavour to set faithfully before you. 'Great men,' as it has been nobly said, 'far more than any Alps or Coliseums, are the true world-wonders, which it concerns us to behold clearly, and imprint for ever on our remembrance. Great men are the fire-pillars in this dark

pilgrimage of mankind; they stand as heavenly signs, ever-living witnesses of what has been —prophetic witnesses of what may still be; the revealed embodied possibilities of human nature; which greatness he who has never with his whole heart passionately loved and reverenced, is himself for ever doomed to be little.'

It has indeed of late years been the fashion with so-called philosophical historians to deny to any single men, even the greatest, that they really exercised any mighty moulding influence on the events of their time. According to the reading of the world's history which these historians favour, the men who seem to us to have dominated their own time did but represent, embody, and bring to a head the tendencies of their age, which would have been inevitably done by some other, if not by them. These tendencies, in fact, are everything in their sight; the men are nothing. There is a certain air of philosophy, a show of wisdom, in such an explanation (it came to a head in the writings of Buckle), which will always secure to it a large amount of acceptance. It is welcome to small men, by the assurance which it seems to give that great men do not really contribute to shape and mould the world more than themselves—that there are none really great

after all—that men do not mould events, but events men. Nay, it will be not merely popular, but it has a certain amount of truth in it—this much, namely, that a man can only be very great by reading his time aright, translating its dumb inarticulate cry into some articulate language, divining its wants and satisfying them, seeing and laying hold of the helps which the time affords to carry out the work which the time requires.

But if more than this is challenged for the age, as contrasted with the man who stands out in the age, it is challenged without warrant or foundation. This claim on behalf of the many, as against the one, is such as every page of history decidedly refutes. At how many of its chief turning-points we encounter men who have stamped themselves and their single personality with an impression never to be effaced on the world in which they lived—have made that world's story other than except for them it would have been—have turned the stream of events into channels assuredly quite different from those in which it would else have run. Who, that is at all capable of forming a judgment, can believe that there would ever have been a free Holland except for William the Silent? or a revival of Imperialism in France, with all the mighty issues for our generation

and for generations to come, with which this revival is pregnant, but for Napoleon the Third? Alexander the Great, Julius Cæsar, Mahomet, Charlemagne, each of them fashioned the history of the world, or of large portions of the world, for long succeeding ages—cast the lives, thoughts, and destinies of millions of men into shapes, which except for them they would never have assumed. Truly, as one meditates on these things, one stands in awe at the might of single men—at the world-shaping influence which they have exercised. It *is* a solemn, it would be a terrible, thing to contemplate, if we did not believe that a mightier than man ruled over all—that these mightiest no less than the least were in His hand; whether helpers or hinderers of His kingdom, were alike raised up by Him to work out His plans —to bring about in the end, by strangest ways, and such as to us seem often the most unlikely, that Kingdom which shall rule over all.

Now I do not in the least pretend to place GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS in the very foremost rank among the moulders of the world's story—such, for example, as the four, perhaps the most influential of all, whom I named just now; but I am confident to say that the history of modern Europe, above all, of a portion of it, which, by

its central position, by its extent and population, by the rich intellectual gifts of its inhabitants, must always exercise an immense influence on the rest—of Germany I mean—would have shaped itself quite otherwise except for him; that he accomplished a work which no other man then living in Europe would or could have accomplished, and that work a work which remains. So far as human eye can see, the Reformation, except for him, would have been crushed in Germany, and probably in all northern Europe, with the exception of England, as well. It was he who successfully asserted those rights of conscience and that free avowal of religious convictions, which, but for him, must have perished there.

In seeking to present this man to you, I have no right to assume that you are so well acquainted with the outward events of his life, as to release me from the necessity of briefly recapitulating the more important of these. I shall also think it best in a few words to describe to you the stage on which his great but brief part was acted. You need not be afraid at this announcement, that I am about to entangle you in the dismal details of the Thirty Years' War. At the same time, if you are at all to understand Gustavus Adolphus and his work, if he is not to be a mere sky-pageant, painted

on the air, I must set him, so to speak, in the framework of his time—put a little background into the picture—explain to you very succinctly how that war came about—for what the contending parties were struggling; and urged by what motives he threw the weight of his sword into the scale which was just about to kick the beam. If I am going over ground familiar to some here, they will pardon this for the sake of others, to whom it is not so familiar.

It is probably, then, known to many, that the Reformation made at its first burst the spiritual conquest of many lands, which afterwards escaped from it again, and returned to their allegiance to Rome. This was, above all, the case in Germany. There was a time when in Austria Proper there was not one Roman Catholic for thirty Protestants. The proportions are now, I suppose, exactly reversed. It was the same in Styria, in Bohemia, and in other lands. Gradually, however, the Church of Rome gathered up her strength — awoke from her first stupor and amazement—burnished her arms—found in the new Order of Jesuits a militia devoted to her interests, and capable of rendering to her most effectual service. Little by little she recovered much of the ground which in the first five and twenty years she had lost, till at length it

came into the hearts of the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church in Germany to reclaim for her all the privileges of a predominant Church, which she had been obliged to renounce. One by one the liberties of the Protestants, though sanctioned by legal acts, were encroached on and diminished. It was sought to wrest from them endowments which were theirs by long custom and right. In many parts of Germany, the only alternatives offered to the Protestants were exile or conformity to Rome. There was unhappily among the professors of the Reformed Faith too much to invite these encroachments. The love of many had grown cold. A hard, rigid assertion of certain dogmas had taken the place of faith working by love. The Lutherans and the Calvinists, even in the presence of a common foe, could not lay aside those jealousies which had constituted the fatal weakness of the Continental Reformation even from the beginning; could with difficulty refrain from biting and devouring one another, even while another was evidently watching and waiting to devour them both. As, however, the danger grew ever more evident and urgent, the Protestant princes and Free Cities of Germany formed themselves, for mutual defence, into what was called the Protestant Union, to which

those on the other side replied by a Catholic League. For a while the hidden fires smouldered beneath the surface, or just darted out here and there a tongue of flame to tell of their presence. Not till 1618 did the flames burst openly forth; and then in a remote part of Germany, in Bohemia; but with so much inflammable material everywhere prepared, it was not long before the conflagration spread over all; a fire which should not be extinguished for thirty years, and which in the end rather burnt itself out, all the fuel which could feed it being consumed, than can be said to have been extinguished at all.

This war, the longest, the most terrible which modern Europe has seen—in which 'Germany was tortured, torn to pieces, wrecked, brayed as in a mortar under the iron mace of war,' from which, at this day, as many believe, it has only partially recovered—may be conveniently divided into three periods. In the first of these, extending from 1618 to 1630, the arms of the Catholic League and the Emperor were everywhere triumphant, beating down the feeble and half-hearted opposition of the Protestant princes of Germany; scattering the forces of some military adventurers, who, in all ways unequal to the task, would have stood in the gap; and lastly, compelling Christian the

Fourth, King of Denmark, who would fain have meddled in the matter, to withdraw again with shame and defeat to his own land. And now it seemed as though the end had come. All Germany lay prostrate at the feet of the Emperor, and of Wallenstein, his terrible commander; who, advancing the Imperial banners to the shores of the German Ocean, assumed to himself the threatening title of Admiral of the Baltic Sea; while the professors of the Reformed Faith—by the so-called Edict of Restitution stripped, in great part, of their rights, expelled from endowments which they had enjoyed for well-nigh a century, their legal standing in the Empire interpreted by triumphant foes—would have been just allowed to exist by sufferance for a few years, and would then have seen even this toleration withdrawn (it had been already withdrawn by the Roman Catholic princes in their own territories), and must either have renounced their faith, or quitted the land.

In one of the innumerable flying sheets and pamphlets which attest the intense interest with which the career of Gustavus was watched in England, the position of affairs at this period is delineated well, and in a piece of excellent English. Having described the mischief-making intrigues of the Jesuits, those 'incendiaries of

the Christian world,' as he calls them, who had brought matters thus far, the author goes on to say:—'And whereas many, ignorant of the Jesuits' far-fetched secret stratagems, did verily believe that now they were attained to the utmost end they aimed at, it appeared far otherwise. For now the fire that so long lay covered under the ashes breaks forth, and sets upon a sudden all these flourishing provinces of Germany in a blaze; and the vizard now removed, their purpose was made manifest to the blindest eyesight, to wit, the total ruin of the true religion, in many, yea, in most parts of Germany professed, the reducing of them again to the Romish superstition, and utter overthrow of the liberties of the Roman Empire; whose designs whosoever, in defence of God's cause and the liberties of their own country, did any way oppose, have been in most barbarous manner prosecuted and persecuted with fire and sword, and many forced to forsake their ancient inheritances, to save their lives and keep a good conscience in still professing that religion wherein they had hitherto been brought up. Others again, more pusillanimous, and loth to lose all for Christ, besides a shameful and perfidious abjuration of that truth which before they had professed, were yet notwithstanding forced to yield to such slavish and servile con-

ditions, as the insolency of a victorious enemy was pleased to impose upon them.'*

It was in this extremity that God raised up a helper for the suffering members of the Reformed Faith in Germany—Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden. Responding to their mute appeal, he descended upon Germany; in little more than two short years turned the whole tide of affairs, until on the plains of Lützen he crowned an heroic life with an heroic death. In this brief period was the turning-point, the *περιπέτεια*, of the bloody drama, which for thirty years was enacted on the stage of Germany. The third act of the tragedy commenced with his death. The cause which he came to support staggered for a season under this blow, yet never entirely lost the superiority which his victories had given it; and when, sixteen years after his death, in 1648, the end at length arrived, then, by the Treaty of Westphalia, the entirely equal rights of the two Confessions were recognized, and this has remained the public law of Germany from that day to the present, nor has it at any time since been seriously disturbed.

Now it is the man who thus turned the tide, who rose like a day-star on the darkest hour of a suffering nation's life, 'The Lion of the Mid-

* *Short Survey of the Kingdom of Sweden.* London, 1632.

night,' as with a play on the word in German, which at once means 'midnight' and 'north,' he has been sometimes called, that I desire to present to you—what manner of man he was, and how he set about and carried through the arduous work which he undertook.

Gustavus Adolphus, born in 1594, was the grandson of Gustavus Wasa, whose marvellous escapes in Dalecarlia, hunted as he was to the death by the murderer of all his kin and usurper of the Swedish throne, have held many of us breathless with hope and fear in our childhood. That he had been well and wisely taught, we gather from the fact that at the age of twelve he spoke Latin, German, Dutch, French, and Italian excellently well, and had a sufficient acquaintance with Polish and Russian; so, too, from the pleasure which, during all his after life, he felt in the great books of classical antiquity; but, above all, from the boundless gratitude in word and deed which in after years he testified to the tutor of his youth. But, dear as were the arts to him, there was a study which was dearer still; and his predilections for it were early displayed. The great religious wars, consequent on the Reformation, had only as yet been partially fought out. The age was a warlike one, and many of the famous soldiers of the time resorted to his father's court—

probably the more that the long truce between Spain and her revolted provinces—those Low Countries which had been so long the cockpit of Europe, 'the dancing-place of Mars' (1609–1621)—left many distinguished soldiers without occupation or employment. There may very well have been gathered at that court some who had followed the white plume of Henry of Navarre into the thickest of the fight at Ivry; or who had stood beside Parma on the bridge of Antwerp, at the explosion of that infernal machine which so nearly cost him his life; or who had shared in that ever memorable defence of Ostend (1601–4) under Maurice of Nassau, the most illustrious among the many illustrious Captains of his time. The young Gustavus, we are told, was never weary of questioning these military strangers concerning the famous battles, sieges, and other passages of arms in which they had borne a part. He was soon to change the theory of war for the practice; and to make good the *Ille faciet*, with which his father would designate him as one destined to accomplish difficult and hazardous enterprises which he himself had declined.

When in the year 1611 he ascended, at his father's death, the Swedish throne, being then in his eighteenth year, he found an exhausted treasury, an alienated nobility, a not undis-

puted succession; and with all this, no less than three wars upon his hands—one with Denmark actually raging, the Danes occupying many strongholds in his dominions—the seeds of two other wars, with Russia and with Poland, sown, and ready shortly to spring up. In bringing these wars to a conclusion—the first with painful sacrifices, the second and third with success, and with as much of honour as was to be gotten from such adversaries as these, the three filling up nearly the first fifteen years of his reign—he served a rude and hard apprenticeship in the art of war. And though the great commander, like the great poet, is not made but born, still we may believe that in these obscure struggles he won an experience which afterwards served him in good stead on a more conspicuous stage. And these struggles, though obscure now, were famous once; and thus it came to pass that the eyes of the suffering members of the Reformed Faith in Germany were more and more turned in hope toward the youthful King of Sweden, as it became daily more evident that deliverance must come from without, that Germany could not herself produce the hero whom the crisis demanded.

Gustavus, who for twelve years had watched the hideous strife, not without a clear presenti-

ment that sooner or later he would be himself drawn into its vortex, might yet very well pause before he committed himself irrevocably to it. True, that he had brought three wars, one to a tolerable, and two to a triumphant close; but it was altogether another thing to step down into the bloody arena of the German debate; to challenge to arms all the powers of the Catholic League, of the Empire, and of Spain, led by Tilly and by Wallenstein—the latter, for Turenne's name had not yet been heard of, reputed the foremost leader of the time. Gustavus, who was as much a statesman as a soldier—as much a match, and an overmatch, for Richelieu in the closet as for Wallenstein in the field—disguised from himself none of the difficulties and dangers of the work. They were indeed many and enormous.

Sweden was a poor and thinly-peopled country, already exhausted by three wars which had rapidly succeeded one another. How would it endure the drain in men and money of such a contest as this? And then, what efficient allies could he hope to find among the Protestant princes of Germany—full of pride and punctilio, jealous of one another, and certain, if he prospered, to be still more jealous of him; thoroughly cowed by the signal example which had been made of one of them, the poor Prince

Palatine, son-in-law to our first James, who, stripped of his dominions, was now wandering a needy exile in foreign lands. What help was there from these, willing to be saved from a peril to which they could not shut their eyes, if only they could be saved without any serious effort or hazard of their own—if only the flower safety could be plucked anywhere except from the nettle danger? And the great body of the Reformed in Germany, whose cry came to him, they too, loving the truth which they held, yet certainly had not hitherto shown that they loved it as at that tremendous crisis it demanded to be loved, better than life itself, and all which life could offer.

And besides all this, setting out upon this distant enterprise—for it was likely to carry him far and ever farther from home—he left many and real dangers behind him. In Denmark, at his very door, he had a neighbour, but no friend. The King of Denmark, he too, as I have mentioned already, had stood forth for a time as the champion of the oppressed Protestants of Germany; but the burden was for other shoulders than his. After two or three ill-managed and disastrous campaigns, he had been too glad to make his peace with the Emperor, and to purchase, by the abandonment

of his friends and allies, an inglorious retreat into his own land. Having himself thus discreditably failed, he was ill content, and plainly showed his displeasure, that another should reap honour where he had only reaped shame —should acquire that prestige and predominance in all the North which he had forfeited and lost. That the danger here was real, that Gustavus left a war behind him, the sequel, though not in his own life-time, abundantly proved. If to all this we add that, if anything happened to him, a little daughter of tenderest age—she was four years old when he passed over into Germany—was the sole heir to the Swedish throne, and we shall own that there was here a combination of dangers which might justly have made the boldest to pause.

In one thing the King was eminently happy. He possessed what kings do not always possess, a friend; and more than this, a friend in all points worthy of himself. Great himself, he was ever quick to recognize greatness in others, and drew into his magic circle, attracted and attached to himself, the worthiest, the noblest, and the best of those who came into contact with him. None had been drawn so closely as Oxenstiern, raised by him to be Chancellor of his kingdom. Long and anxiously, in many a written communication which can even now be

read, all that was to be hoped, and all that was to be feared from this enterprise, was earnestly debated between them; the Chancellor for the most part urging his doubts and his difficulties, the King seeking to extenuate or to set them aside. At length his resolution was fully formed, and the consent of his Estates obtained. Then, when the die was cast, the King exclaimed —'For me there remains henceforth no more rest, but the eternal.' Solemn words, which show that he shut his eyes to none of the infinite toils of the work which was before him! Many dangers of the battle-field he had escaped; but it was little likely that he should escape them to the end. As he said himself—for he loved proverbs, and their homely, practical wisdom—'The pitcher goes often to the well, but it is broken at last;' and he quitted Sweden, high indeed of heart and hope, but with the sure presentiment that he quitted it never to return.

If we pause for an instant here, and seek to penetrate into the recesses of the King's heart, and, by the light of his after words and actions, to read the motives which launched him on an enterprise of such incalculable hazard for himself and for his kingdom, we shall, I think, do him no wrong if we say that the motives were these:

First—A deep and genuine sympathy with his co-religionists in Germany, and with their sufferings; joined to a conviction that he was called of God to assist them in this the hour of their utmost need.

Secondly—A sense of the most real danger which threatened his own kingdom, if the entire liberties, political and religious, of Northern Germany were trodden out, and the Free Cities of the German Ocean, Stralsund and the rest, falling into the hands of the Emperor, became hostile outposts from which to assail him. He felt that he was only going to meet a war which, if he tarried at home, would sooner or later inevitably come to seek him there.

And, thirdly—as I am not here to describe a faultless monster, but only a noble Christian hero, with his own faults and infirmities, I cannot doubt that there was working in his mind a desire to give to Sweden a more forward place in the world, with a consciousness of mighty powers in himself which craved a wider sphere for their exercise. Protector of the Confederated Protestant States of Northern Germany—some such title and dignity as this there are, I think, clear tokens that he hoped to obtain. To deny that Gustavus Adolphus was ambitious—that, if there was something of Luther, there was also something of Alexander

in him—with the not unfrequent attempt to make a mere theological hero of him, is to shut our eyes to the facts of history, and to determine we will pourtray him, not as he was, but as we perhaps may wish he could have been. At the same time, it is only he whom the French so happily call the *dénigreur*, or the blackener—he to whom all nobleness is unwelcome, rebuking as it does the meanness which he finds in himself—it is only such a one who will see in Gustavus first and chiefly a seeker of his own glory, and not of the glory of God.

Long hindered by contrary winds, he at length made a successful passage; and on Midsummer Day, 1630 (some called to mind with interest that it was exactly the centenary of the delivery of the Augsburg Confession), he landed on the little island of Usedom, at the mouth of the Oder.

'So we have got another kingling on our hands,' the Emperor exclaimed in scorn, when the news reached Vienna. They had indeed; and him or his they should not have off their hands for some eighteen years to come; and very hard indeed they found it to get them off their hands at all.

Himself the first upon the shore, Gustavus fell at once upon his knees, and poured out his soul in earnest prayer; and then, as the

laborare and the *orare*—the working and praying—went ever hand in hand with him, he was the first to seize the spade; and as fast as the troops landed, he raised with one half entrenchments, while the other half stood in battle array, ready to repel all who should molest them. The army which he brought with him (and he could not at this time count a single ally in Germany) seems to us almost ridiculously inadequate to the work which he had undertaken. In Pomerania alone there were forty thousand Imperial troops, under the command of Torquato Conti, an Italian adventurer, and one of the cruellest and worst of Wallenstein's brigand chiefs, but not an incapable commander. The army of Gustavus, with which he was about to affront a force of which this was but the advanced guard, consisted in all but of fifteen thousand men, of which only three thousand were cavalry. To this, however, must be added a numerous and well-appointed artillery, on which he always set the highest store.

But if the numbers of his army were small, the materials were admirable—hardy children of the North, as ready, perhaps readier, for a winter campaign than for a summer; trained in the habits of a strict, and, so far as he could make it so, a godly, discipline. Nor certainly

was the material of Gustavus's army rendered worse by including in its ranks a Scottish brigade; for of the officers who served under Gustavus, there are none of whom we hear more often or more honourably than the Seatons, the Leslies, the Mackays, the Monroes, the Hepburns — none who were more entirely trusted by the King, or on whom he was more apt to rely when some difficult and dangerous exploit was to be performed. To the present day there are among the Swedish nobility several who bear a Scottish name, descendants of those who fought under the great King.

Then, too, he had formed, and at his death left behind him, a school of illustrious captains, only inferior to himself in military genius. Pointing to a group of his staff officers, soon after he entered Germany, he said to a French envoy—'All these are captains, and fit to command armies.' It was no empty boast. When his disappearance from the scene gave them room to display their powers to the full, they well approved the confidence that he had in them. One, indeed, of these, whom he is said to have esteemed the highest of all, fell before the King on the field of Leipsic; but the others, who, following one another in rapid succession, led the Swedish armies during the remainder of the war, constitute a series of

commanders who would probably range among the very foremost in the second rank. To their genius it was mainly owing, that, even after France had intervened, Sweden was not obscured by her mightier ally, but continued to the end to play so prominent a part in the contest. The first of these was Gustavus Horn, who, falling into the hands of the Imperialists at the fatal battle of Nordlingen, was counted by them the most precious trophy and result of a victory in which an entire Swedish army was either taken or destroyed. He was followed by Banèr, who, save in military capacity and energy, lent little credit to the cause which he served. Him, perishing before long by women and by wine, Torstenson succeeded, the ablest among them all—a martyr to gout, but who, borne on a litter, performed almost incredible feats of rapid execution; on one occasion marching of a sudden into Denmark, and there finishing off a Danish war as a mere episode of the more serious work he had on hand; and altogether deserving well the war-name of 'Lightning' (Blixten), which his soldiers delighted to give him. The last was Wrangel, whom the termination of the war scarcely left time to show what capacities were in him, but who did excellently well all that he was called on to do.

But, capable as these were, one more capable than them all led the little army which now landed at Usedom; one who approved himself ere long as by very much the foremost captain of his time. Napoleon the First—and, except where personal pique marred his judgment, there could be no better judge—was wont to set Gustavus Adolphus among the eight greatest generals whom the world had ever seen; placed him in the same rank with Alexander the Great, Hannibal, Julius Cæsar, in the ancient world; with Turenne, Prince Eugene, Frederick the Great, and himself, in the modern. Gustavus was great as a captain and commander, not merely as one that employed to the best advantage all the military science which he inherited from others, but in that he was himself inventive, creative—leaving his own mark on the whole art of war; doing more than any other to bring about the complete transformation of it from the mediæval system to the modern.

His fundamental idea, that which ran through and dictated all the changes which he made (it was, indeed, only common sense applied to the art of war), was this—to turn to account, and to make the most of every man he brought into the field. This may seem obvious enough, but it was very far from being acted on by the

other commanders of the seventeeth century. Gustavus was the first who understood to the full the enormous changes which the invention of gunpowder, or rather the increasing efficiency of musquetry and artillery, demanded in the whole disposition of troops—saw that it was madness to group infantry any more in huge, solid, almost immovable masses, often thirty or forty deep. This might have been necessary once; it might have been impossible to repel in any other way the heavy-armed knights of the middle ages; but a new order of things had succeeded, and there was a double absurdity in such an arrangement now. Only a few, only two or three of the foremost ranks, could thus deliver their fire; all the rest were paralysed and useless; while the shot of the enemy tore through, and made hideous lanes of carnage in these huge unmanageable masses. The marshalling of troops in lighter, more open order, and, if not exactly in line, yet with many of the advantages of it, was his invention; and this disposition of his troops gave him as much superiority over his adversaries as the agile Roman legion possessed over the unwieldy Macedonian phalanx. I may just mention further—for since the Volunteer movement we all take more or less interest in military affairs—that before his time the only artillery brought

into the open field consisted of what are called pieces of position; huge and heavy guns, slowly dragged along by twelve, sixteen, twenty, or twenty-four horses or oxen; which, once placed, could only remain where they were, and this, though the whole stress of the battle had shifted elsewhere. It was he who first introduced flying artillery, capable of being rapidly transferred from one part of the field to another, according to the changing needs of the fight.

In other ways Gustavus was well fitted to make a small army do the work of a large. There could be few malingerers in an army whose king and commander, in every toil and in every danger, claimed the first and often the largest share of that toil and that danger for himself. There were curious contrasts in him. Singularly cautious in the management of a campaign, always careful to secure his base of operations, his lines of possible retreat, Gustavus was daring even to rashness in the exposure of his own person; unlike in this to Wallenstein his antagonist, who was chary of himself, and, as many did not scruple to affirm, more shy of danger than became a soldier. But Gustavus at a siege would in the same day be at once generalissimo; chief engineer to lay out the lines; pioneer, spade in hand and in his shirt, digging in the trenches; and leader of a

storming party to dislodge the foe from some annoying outwork. If a party of the enemy's cavalry were to be surprised in a night attack, he would himself undertake the surprise. He indeed carried this quite too far, obeying overmuch the instincts and impulses of his own courageous heart. And yet there was also a true humility in it all—a feeling that no man ought to look at himself as indispensable. 'God is immortal,' he was wont to reply, when remonstrated with on this matter, and reminded of the fearful chasm, not to be filled by any other, which his death would assuredly leave.

When we thus regard Gustavus as the most skilful commander of his age, it becomes doubly interesting to note the striking resemblance between the plans which he adopted and tactics which he pursued on his first landing in Germany, and those of our great Duke in the early period of his career in the Peninsula. There were many points of resemblance in their situations. Each was challenging to the conflict a foe to all appearance immeasurably stronger than himself—one who could bring armies numerically four or five times larger into the field; who, in fact, had such armies already in the field. Each was well aware that if the army which he brought with him were lost, it would be impossible to obtain another. Each had

need to combine qualities seemingly the most opposite—the utmost prudence, patience, caution, with the extremest boldness and promptitude to strike a decisive blow when the opportunity for this arrived. And exactly as our Duke, after long tarrying by his ships, or behind his triple lines, seized his hour, struck terribly to the left and to the right, the two gates of Spain, Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos, falling before his blows; so too, after long months, during which Gustavus tarried in remote Pomerania, painfully winning for himself a secure retreat, besieging and taking one little town after another till they called him in derision, The Snow King, who could only endure in those colder regions, and would melt if ever he advanced southward — after more than a year of this hugging of the coasts of the Northern Sea, he too, when his hour was come, stept forth, the boldest of the bold, and showed himself as daring now as he had showed himself cautious before. I may add that his fortified camp at Werben, at the confluence of the Elbe and the Havel, to which when overmatched he retired, suffering his adversaries to waste their strength before it, bore no little resemblance, in the spirit which dictated it, and the use to which it was turned, to the Duke's lines at Torres Vedras.

From the first Gustavus had resolved not to hazard a battle till he had found some allies in Germany; it would indeed have been madness for him to have done it. It was long before such appeared; for gallant little Hesse Cassel, which threw in its lot with him at once, and, among many unfaithful, remained faithful to the last, was at once too small and too distant to count for much. The two most powerful of the Protestant princes, those whose alliance it most concerned him to secure, were his brother-in-law, the Elector of Brandenburg (I need hardly remind you that the kingdom of Prussia did not come into existence till some seventy years later), and the Elector of Saxony, the latter a much greater person then in Germany than a king of Saxony is now; for Saxony has lost in power, extent, and influence, since the seventeeth century, almost as much as Prussia has gained. Little good, I am sorry to say, can be reported of either. John George of Saxony was a mighty Nimrod. He had killed with his own hands, or seen killed under his eyes, 113,629 wild animals. He was moreover a great drunkard; the Beer King, or, more contemptuously still, the Beer Jug, was the nickname which he bore. Looking at himself as, by hereditary right, the champion of the Protestant cause, and yet too timorous to affront

the dangers which that championship involved —willing, if he could, to form a middle party which should mediate between the Emperor and the Swedish King—he beheld with intense displeasure another stepping into the foremost place, and resolute to put all upon the hazard. When to this we add that his court-chaplain and principal adviser was long ago suspected, and now is known, to have been sold to the Court of Vienna, and, being a very high Lutheran indeed, thought a Calvinist on the whole worse than a Papist—it is plain to see that not very easily would any effectual help be gotten out of him. As little was to be obtained from the King's own brother-in-law of Brandenburg. Those who have read will not easily forget Carlyle's account of him, and of his shuffling 'peace at any price' policy, through the whole of this war. 'Poor man,' exclaims Carlyle, 'it was his fate to stand in the range of these huge collisions, where the Titans were hurling rocks at one another, and he hoped by dexterous skipping to escape share of the game.'

Provoked, angered, endangered as the King was by the hesitations of the Electors and other weaklings like them, he was evidently sometimes amused—and this amusement is very characteristic of the strong humour which

was so marked a feature in him—at their feeble efforts to wriggle through a time like that, taking no part on this side or on that in a conflict which should decide for them whether they were to be at all—thinking at the same time to keep terms with him and with the Emperor, or, as he regarded it, with God and with the devil. But with all Gustavus's humorous appreciation of their perplexities, there was no man less to be trifled with—no man who would less stand any nonsense. He was come to save them—with their will, if they would lend a helping hand; against their will, if they refused.

These poor German princes, to say truth, were in about equal terror of their oppressor and their deliverer; or perhaps in worse fear of the latter than the former. From the Emperor they hoped (it would have proved but a vain hope), to purchase safety for themselves by various concessions and compliances, or, at any rate, they might entertain the expectation, as being the biggest morsels, that they would be swallowed the last; but there was no escape from their terrible deliverer, who insisted on dragging them into the conflict, and that at any rate they should not perish without striking one manful blow for themselves.

There was published a few years ago, from

the Royal Saxon archives, the confidential report of an Envoy, Herr von Wilmerstorff, sent by the Elector of Brandenburg to the King, in July, 1630. Gustavus was then just beginning to make a strong position for himself in Northern Germany; and the mission of the Envoy was to persuade him, if possible, to refrain from advancing farther into the land, to suggest the jealousies which would thus be awakened even among the Protestants, and to urge that he should at least consent to an armistice, the Elector offering himself as a mediator between him and the Catholic League. This report is so characteristic of the King—gives so much insight into his manner of dealing with men, is indeed so authentic a piece of biography, that I must ask you to listen to a brief summary of it. The Envoy having reported the delivery of his message, proceeds: 'Hereupon his Majesty, after he had most graciously heard me out—laughing, however, a little when I came to the proposal of an armistice—answered me at length, no one else being present: "I have listened to the arguments by which my lord and brother-in-law would seek to dissuade me from the war, but could well have expected another communication from him—namely, that God having helped me so far, and come as I am into this land for no other end than to

deliver its poor and oppressed estates and people from the horrible tyranny of the thieves and robbers who have plagued it so long; above all, to free his Highness from like tribulation, he would rather have joined himself with me, and thus not failed to seize the opportunity which God has wonderfully vouchsafed him. Or does not his Highness yet know that the intention of the Emperor and of the League is this—not to cease till the Evangelical religion is quite rooted out of the Empire; and that he himself has nothing else to look forward to, than to be compelled either to deny his faith, or to forsake his land? Does he hope with prayers and entreaties, and such like means, to obtain any other result? For God's sake, let him bethink himself a little, and for once grasp manly counsels. For myself, I cannot go back. *Jacta est alea, transivimus Rubiconem.* I seek in this work not mine own things, no profit at all, except the safety of my kingdom; else have I nothing from it but expense, weariness, toil, and danger of life and limb. Now is your master's happiest opportunity, while his land is free from the Imperial soldiery, that he himself garrison and arm his fortresses, and be thus no longer a mere deputy of the Emperor —a servant in his own land. *Qui se fait brebis, le loup le mange.* Or if he will not do this,

let him trust me only with Custrin, which I may hold; and remain you in your sloth, which your master so much loves. What else do you propose? For this I say to you plainly beforehand, I will hear and know nothing of neutrality. His Highness must be friend or foe. When I come to his borders, he must declare himself hot or cold. The battle is one between God and the devil. Will his Highness hold with God, let him stand on my side; if he prefer to hold with the devil, then he must fight with me. *Tertium non dabitur.* And I beseech you take this commission upon you, to carry my answer exactly back to his Highness; for I have no people by me whom I can spare to send. I am not indisposed to peace. I know that the fortune of war is uncertain, having abundantly proved it in the many wars which, with various issues, I have waged. But that now, when by God's grace I am advanced so far, I should again withdraw, that can no man advise me, not the Emperor himself, when he will use his reason. That your master should mediate, I can very well suffer; but he must at the same time put himself in a posture of defence and arm, else all his mediating will help nothing. Several of the Hanse towns are ready to join me. I only wait till a Prince of the Empire comes forward. What might not

the two Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, together with those cities, accomplish? Would God that a Maurice were here!"

'I replied that I had no authority to treat on such matters; but for my humble self doubted how far my master could join arms with the King, having due regard to his honour and good faith. He interrupted me outright—"Yes, they will soon put the honour upon you of turning you out of home and land. They will keep faith with you as they have so long kept the Capitulations."

'I.—"One must keep the future before one's eyes, and consider, if fortune should be unfavourable, how all would go to wrack."

'King.—"That is what will happen, if you sit still; and would have happened before this if I had not stept in. His Highness should do as I do, and leave the issue to God."

'I.—"Your Majesty cannot take it ill that my master prefers to follow after peace; above all, when so much at this moment invites it; as, first, the general desire for a pacification, and, secondly, the Diet now holding at Ratisbon. If only his Highness might lay before the Diet how, in your Majesty's judgment, peace could be attained, much good might be effected; and thus, too, that might be averted, which else may happen, that your Majesty should be put

under ban, and proclaimed *pro hoste communi* of the Empire."

'King.—"Yes; they will put me under ban, who am come, not as an enemy, but as friend, —to put down and drive away the robbers and destroyers of the Empire; not to change aught, but to preserve. If they are mad enough not to own this, and proclaim me for an enemy, the ban may light upon themselves as soon as upon me. This work which I have begun can very well go forward for fifty years, and God will raise up for it others from our ashes."

'I.—"But anyhow the land and people will be ruined. Better that your Majesty should impart to him in confidence your conditions of peace."

'King.—"But what security shall I have for their observance? Paper and ink?"

'I.—"Your Majesty shall have such bonds as bind men. What is duly resolved in the Diet, that will be held fast."

'King.—"No, that is nothing. Something real in hand may give security; nothing else. My hands have eyes in them; they believe what they see (*Manus meæ oculatæ sunt; credunt quod vident*). Let them restore the banished princes and make me their Protector, to hold their fortresses; else they will stand to nothing, and are not to be trusted."

'I.– "While your Majesty is content that his Highness should mediate, so must at least neutrality be allowed him."

'King.–"Yes, till I come into your country. All that is mere trumpery, which the wind scatters away. What sort of thing is neutrality? I do not understand it."'

'He presently reverted to the Duke of Pomerania, said that the worthy Prince was perfectly satisfied with him, had entreated that he would be his father. "But I," said his Majesty, "told him I had rather be his son, seeing he had no children." Hereupon I replied, "Yes, your Majesty, that may very well be, if only my master may keep the right of primogeniture."

'King.—"Yes, he shall keep it; but he must help to defend it, and not barter it, like Esau, for a mess of pottage."'

This last little passage between the King and the Envoy must be explained by the fact, that the Elector laid claim to succeed to the childless Duke's dominions, but was in great terror lest the King of Sweden should be before him, and inherit in his stead.

I cannot but think that the agent who has made so excellent a report of this most characteristic discourse, does so with an evident sympathy for the King; and though, as an honest man, doing his very best for his employer, not

at all displeased when the chaff which he was despatched to offer for grain was winnowed away with so unceremonious a breath. I will only add, that the King was as good as his word, when he declared his inability to understand what neutrality at such a crisis meant: and thus, when negotiations with his vacillating brother-in-law drew out into length, he put an end to all shilly-shally, by advancing his army, with loaded cannon and matches burning, to the gates of Berlin. The treaty of alliance was quickly signed; and it was not long before the force of circumstances, the intolerable outrages of the Imperial commander, obliged the Elector of Saxony also to make common cause with the Swedish King; though this with less than half a heart, and with many a secret resolution of deserting the common cause, and patching up a private peace of his own at the first favourable opportunity; which accordingly, soon after the King's death, by the treaty of Prague he did (1635), without one of the true objects of the war attained; by this act of his bequeathing to his native land thirteen years more of desolation and woe.

When, a little while ago, in the preparation of this Lecture, I was examining in the British Museum a collection of the broadsheets, placards, ballads, caricatures, portraits of illustrious

or popular persons, the heroes of the day, which appeared during the course of the Thirty Years' War, I lighted on a print which was calculated to stir a smile, and at the same time some thoughts deeper than a smile. It is of date 1631, and evidently was published in the first joy of these alliances which promised so well to the Protestant cause. This print represents Gustavus and this poor paltry Saxon Elector, side by side, like twin heroes, each of them waving his truncheon, and prancing on his war-horse, and one making just as gallant a show as the other. It may stir a thought in us to consider that this print did, no doubt, accurately set forth the estimate of them which, at that moment, by many was formed; knowing as we know now, what meanness, pusillanimity, and falsehood were lurking under all this outside bravery in the one—what courage, magnanimity, and faithfulness unto the death in the other; that of these, the Castor and Pollux, the twin heroes of a day, one is only dragged out of his merited oblivion for such dishonourable mention as mine is this evening; the other shines and will shine, in the night of this world, a clear star, beckoning to noble deeds, so long as the world shall endure.

But to return. Take a brief extract here from a work written by one of those gallant

Scots to whom I have already referred. Colonel Robert Monro—himself a Dugald Dalgetty in his way, but one of a very noble type—has left a record of his share in these campaigns, and it is from him I quote. He is describing the junction of the two armies, the Saxon and the Swedish, and the strong contrast in outward show which the one and the other presented; 'the Saxon, which for the pleasing of the eye was the most complete little army, well armed and well arrayed, that ever mine eye did look on, whose officers did all look as if they were going in their best apparel and arms to be painted, where nothing was defective the eye could behold. Our army having lain overnight on a parcel of ploughed ground, they were so dusty, they looked just like kitchen wenches with their uncleanly rags, but within which were hidden courageous hearts, being old experimented blades. Yet these Saxon gentry, in their feathers and bravery, did judge of us and ours according to our outsides, thinking but little of us; nevertheless, we thought not the worse of ourselves.' The chief part of this Saxon army, which made so brave an appearance, fled early, as is well known, in the day, from the field of Leipsic, leaving all the brunt of the battle to be borne by the Swedes. But I must not anticipate.

Thus joined, although tardily and reluctantly, by the princes whose battles he was fighting far more than his own, Gustavus was at length able to measure himself in not unequal arms with the forces of the Catholic League. He did not wait long to do so. Advancing boldly into the heart of Germany, on the plains of Leipsic he defeated Tilly, the victor of more than twenty battle-fields; and not defeated only, but so shattered, scattered, ground his army into dust, that for a while all Germany lay open to him to march whithersoever he would.

Gustavus has been greatly blamed that he did not at once advance to Vienna and there end the war, imposing his own terms upon the Emperor. There have even been those who have insinuated that he refrained from doing so, as not counting that it would be for his own glory, or for the furtherance of those far-reaching schemes which he meditated, to bring the struggle to so speedy a close. His whole life is an answer to the charge of being this traitor to the cause which he had undertaken. That he was ambitious—that vague and vast possibilities for himself did float before his eyes—I have not denied; but ever in subordination to the solemn work which he had taken in hand, and, as I believe, chiefly valuable to him as giving pledge for the permanence of that work.

Neither is there the slightest reason for supposing that such an advance would have been attended with such results, any more than that Rome would have fallen if Hannibal had followed up his victory at Cannæ by an immediate advance upon it. Vienna would not have opened its gates at his summons; he certainly was in no condition to besiege and take it. He would after a while have retired from its walls with wasted and baffled forces, as Torstenson at a later period of the war actually did, with precious time lost, and having missed all those fruits of his triumph which were actually within his reach.

It indeed poured a rich harvest into his lap. Borne on the wings of victory, *cum Deo et victricibus armis*—for that was the characteristic legend on his medals at this time struck—he marched towards Franconia and the Rhine, everywhere hailed by the down-trodden Protestants of Germany, whose worship he re-established, whose churches he restored to them, as their saviour and deliverer. The very excess of their gratitude would sometimes make him afraid. Only three days before his death he said to his chaplain, 'They make a god of me: God will punish me for this.' How enthusiastic this their welcome must have been we can a little understand, if we keep in mind the halo of

glory which at this time encircled his brows—the enormous boons which, at extremest hazard to his person and to his kingdom, he had conferred upon them; and when we add to this, that he eminently possessed all the arts of popularity—gracious and eloquent speech—a condescension at once natural and studied, and, with those ambitious hopes for the future which played before him, the desire as well as the power to win golden opinions from all sorts of men. Even his enemies could not altogether resist the magic of his presence. Thus at Munich, which he entered as a conqueror, he visited the Jesuits' College—debated in Latin the doctrine of transubstantiation with one of the fathers, who did to him the honours of the establishment—and left them so well satisfied, that after his death they declared he was a particular admirer of their Society. They were certainly mistaken in this. He always ascribed the main guilt of this hideous civil war to their intrigues. It was in his sight—and he was wont so to call it—the Jesuits' War.

Gustavus was in all this the strongest possible contrast to Wallenstein. Conscious that there was no true greatness in him, the Duke of Friedland was ever anxious to produce an impression of greatness—to impose on men. Excessive in his punishments, excessive in his

rewards (*rapti largitor*), surrounded with an incredible number and pomp of retainers, he was himself reserved, mysterious, would fain induce a belief that there was something about him unlike to other men; that he could read the stars, that he held strange communications with the invisible world. The King, on the contrary, took no care of his dignity. He knew that his dignity was in no danger; that it could abundantly take care of itself: that one having the realities of greatness, could safely dispense with the shows. Affable, a man of the people, accessible to all, the genial Monarch was ever ready to exchange words with friend or foe; had still, as the occasion required, an earnest word, or a merry jest, or a quick retort for all comers, with never any misgiving but that everywhere he could hold his own; that in the keenest dialectic fence he would as certainly prove master of the situation as in the lists of arms and the stormiest battle-field.

As I am desirous to set Gustavus before you, not in his lights only, but in his lights and shadows alike, I must not leave unnoticed a fault which he had—namely, that he was sometimes excessive in anger, or angry when the cause of anger was not sufficient. I do not find fault with him that he could be angry; nay, he who cannot be angry, and who is not angry, at

meanness, or falsehood, or injustice, or cruelty, is worth very little, and is wanting in one of the nobler passions of the soul. For instance, that he could be angry with one who turned the noble, yet dreadful, mission of a soldier into the trade of a brigand—that he could and did seize, and give over with his own hands to the short shrift of the provost-marshal, the plunderer and the marauder, saying to such a one, 'It is better for thee, and for us all, that thou shouldst die'—that his wrath could be terrible against all unrighteous doers, I think only the better of him for this. But this was not all. One who wrote concerning him immediately after his death, and apparently from personal knowledge, allows that there was a serious fault here. His words are these: 'There was nothing in him the least way blameable but his choler, to which the least provocation gave fire—a humour familiar to fiery spirits, chafed with continual business which often falls out cross. But he had a corrective ever ready, which was an overflowing courtesy and sweetness, to him natural, which stopped and repaired the breach his anger had made. For any hasty speech he would give satisfaction, not only to men of eminency, who might justly be offended, but to those also of the meanest condition. In acknowledgment of his nature, so apt to take

fire at the least mistake, he would often say to those about him, "I bear with you in many things; you must bear with me in this."'*

Let me set before you, picture and pourtray so far as I can, the outward form and fashion of the man at this time, that so you may the more vividly present him to your mind's eye. Something you have heard of his mental and moral gifts. Outwardly, too, he was one 'framed in the prodigality of nature.' His look proclaimed the hero, and, at the same time, the genuine child of the North. A head taller than men of ordinary stature, yet all his limbs were perfectly proportioned. Majesty and courage shone out from his clear grey eyes; while, at the same time, an air of mildness and *bonhommie* tempered the earnestness of his glance. He had the curved eagle nose of Cæsar, of Napoleon, of Wellington, of Napier—the conqueror's nose, as we may call it. His skin was fair; his hair blond, almost gold-coloured, so that the Italians were wont to call him, *Re d'oro*, or, The Gold-king. In latter years he was somewhat inclined to corpulence, though not so much as to detract from the majesty of his appearance. This made it, however, not easy to find a horse which was equal to his weight.

* *Harleian Miscellany*, vol. iv. p. 208.

But to return from this digression. His course was still onward. There stands, I believe, to the present day, on the banks of the Rhine, and not far from Mayence, where he held high court for nearly two months, what is still known as the Swedish Column; for even to the banks of that famous stream, and beyond them, he carried his victorious arms; till the King of France himself, ally though he was of Gustavus, and delighted at every humiliation which befel the House of Austria, is reported to have exclaimed, 'This Goth must be stopped.' Sweeping round from Western Germany, having rallied to his banner a number of the smaller princes and free cities, that were only waiting for his advent to declare themselves on his side, he again turned eastward and northward his triumphant course. On the banks of the Lech, his old adversary, Tilly, crossed his path once more, and would have barred the way, but must leave on this second field not his fame only, but his life. This crossing of the Lech in the face of an enemy is by competent judges esteemed the most signal military exploit that Gustavus at any time accomplished.

The great actors in the first period of the Thirty Years' War begin now rapidly to disappear from the stage. The King's turn will come next; but not until he has plucked the

laurels from a yet more illustrious brow. There was one name, one fame, one reputation in arms—that, I mean, of Wallenstein—which the hard-pressed Imperialists might hope would prove a match for his. But the oppressions, outrages, excesses of his army had been so intolerable, had called forth such menacing remonstrances from the Emperor's own allies, that he had been compelled to dismiss him from his command a little before the Swedish King landed at Usedom. It was not till the extremity of his distress that he again appealed to him; while Wallenstein, as a man injured and aggrieved, for a long while held proudly aloof, and only on his own conditions at last consented to resume the command.

Then, indeed, he summoned, as by the stamp of his foot, a huge army out of the ground, and, moving in the rear of the King, would have cut him off from his communications with Sweden, from Saxony, and from the whole basis of his operations on the coasts of the Northern Ocean. This at once compelled the return of the King; and on the field of Lützen, Gustavus and Wallenstein, the foremost captains in all the world, at length measured themselves in the lists of arms against one another.

Once before, under the walls of Nuremberg, they had looked one another in the face—had

come to partial hand-strokes; but then had separated again without the final arbitrament of battle. The sun of both was near to its setting; the sun of each was to set in blood; but, oh! how unlike the bloody setting of the one and of the other! As the men were, so were their ends: the noble King breathing out his soul on the battle-field, in the arms of victory, his great life-work virtually accomplished; while the Bohemian adventurer, himself a traitor, is by meaner traitors butchered in his secret chamber, and all his tangled web of treachery perishes with him.

The King's end is the first which shall arrive. The field of Lützen, only a few miles from Leipsic, the scene of his former triumph, and, like it, not then for the last time to take the rich incarnadine of blood, was the spot which his death should make memorable for ever.* There should be the appointed term and bourne of his short but glorious career. Gustavus would appear for some time back to have had a presentiment that the end was not far off. It was only a little while before, at the siege of Ingoldstadt, that his horse was killed under him by a cannon-ball from the walls, and the King, hurled to the ground with it, was sup-

* See H. Merivale, *Historic Studies*, 1865, *A Visit to Lützen*, pp. 286–324.

posed himself also to be slain. He rose, however, unhurt; only saying to those about him, 'The apple is not ripe yet.' It was not ripe, but it was nearly so. Yet, whatever presentiments he may then have felt, he was more than cheerful as he went forth to this, the latest labour of his life. It was ever so with him upon such occasions, for in him were grandly fulfilled those grand lines of our own poet, who pourtrays 'The Happy Warrior' as one who—

> 'called upon to face
> Some awful moment, to which Heaven has joined
> Great issues, good or bad, for human kind,
> Is happy as a lover, and attired
> With sudden brightness, like a man inspired.'

A severe wound which the King had received in his Polish campaigns, made the wearing of his armour very painful to him. When it was brought to him this morning, he declined to put it on, saying, 'God is my armour,' and entered into the battle without it. Gustavus was a little short-sighted, and always, as I have already mentioned, tempted to expose himself overmuch. This morning a heavy mist hung over the field; and in riding, accompanied by a small escort, from one part of the field to another, he found himself suddenly entangled among some of the Imperial cuirassiers. His left arm was shattered with a pistol-shot. At

first he thought to have remained on the field, and was unwilling it should be known that he was wounded; but, growing faint with pain and the loss of blood, he said to a German prince at his side—'Cousin, lead me out of the tumult, for I am hurt.' At this instant an Imperialist officer rode close behind him—no one hindering, for he was not recognized as an enemy—and shot the King between the shoulders. He fell from his horse, which dragged him a few paces, and then disengaging itself, and rushing wildly along the Swedish lines with bloody housings, announced to all that some misfortune had befallen the King. All who were round him fled, save only one young German aide-de-camp, or volunteer, who, dismounting, would fain have raised and set him on his own horse. The King stretched out his hands to him; but the attempt to lift him was vain, for Gustavus was a large man, and probably wounded to the death already. Meanwhile three of the enemy's horsemen rode up, and demanded who this officer of rank, that lay wounded on the ground, might be. Löbelfing—for he should not pass unnamed—refusing to answer, received several hurts, of which he died five days after; but was able to give this account of the latest moments of his lord. 'I am the King of Sweden,' feebly exclaimed Gustavus. A pistol-shot

through the head, and several sword-thrusts through the body, were the answer. His hat, blackened with the powder and pierced with the ball, is still to be seen in the arsenal at Vienna, his bloody buff-coat as well. More is not known of the final agony, except that, when the tide of battle had a little ebbed, the body of the hero-king was found with the face to the ground, despoiled and stripped to the shirt, trodden under the hoofs of horses, trampled in the mire, and disfigured with all these wounds. The surgeon who embalmed the corpse that it might be sent to Sweden for burial, found upon it seven freshly inflicted wounds, with the scars and cicatrices of thirteen more. Such was the end. The pitcher which had gone often to the well *was* broken at last; but the treasure which the earthen vessel contained was not, with the broken sherds of that vessel, spilt upon the ground.*

* Michelet (*Hist. de la France*, vol. xii. p. 128) relates the King's death in the following words:—

'On sait sa mort. A cette furieuse bataille de Lutzen, il accable Waldstein, le bat, le blesse, le crible, le renverse, lui tue ses fameux chefs, l'homme surtout qui fut la guerre même, ce Pappenheim, qui, en naissant, eut au front deux épées sanglantes.' Il revenait, paisible et pacifique, confiant comme à l'ordinaire, de la terrible exécution. Il n'avait avec lui qu'un Allemand, un petit prince, qui avait passé, repassé, plus d'une fois d'un parti à l'autre. Un coup part, et Gustave tombe. L'homme suspect qui l'accompagnait s'enfuit, et alla droit à Vienne (16 Novembre 1632).' It is

It will be easy to imagine what a cry, I will not say of despair, but of anguish, went up

to be hoped that this is not a fair specimen of the accuracy of Michelet's history in its details. There are almost as many mistakes here as there are lines. Wallenstein was not wounded at Lützen. The spur is reported to have been torn away from his boot by a cannon-ball; and that was all. The King certainly did not 'kill' Pappenheim, being himself dead for some time before his arrival on the field of battle. The exact hour of Pappenheim's appearance on the field is uncertain: but it is quite certain that he did not appear till long after the King had fallen. Those who bring the two events the nearest, place the King's death at 1 P.M., Pappenheim's arrival at 2. So far from having actually won the battle, and being slain as he was calmly returning from it, it was in the very heat of a conflict, in which the scales of victory had not evidently inclined to the one side or the other, that Gustavus fell, and the battle lasted for some hours more. All who are familiar with its details will remember that his second in command, Kniphausen, on the tidings of his master's death, is reported to have exclaimed, 'There is still time to make a good retreat;' and was taken up by the fiery Duke of Saxe-Weimar with the words, 'There is still time to win a glorious victory.' So far from being accompanied by no more than a single German, besides Prince Francis Albert of Saxe-Lauenburg, to whom Michelet of course alludes, there were several others with Gustavus at the moment, as for instance the equerry Truchsess, by whom the cuirassier who had discharged his piece into the King's back was immediately after killed, the young volunteer who was so faithful unto death, with three or four more. Neither is it true that Francis Albert had already passed and repassed more times than one from one side to the other. He had left the Imperial service, and attached himself to Gustavus, and this was all. As little did he take to flight and go straight to Vienna. On the contrary, he did not change sides again till several months after the King's death; having remained

from all Reformed Europe at the tidings of Gustavus' death. In England they found it hard to believe that he was indeed dead; and more than once the report came that, though grievously wounded, he was still alive and would recover, and yet accomplish the work which he had begun. And the circle of those who mourned his premature taking away was wider even than this. The Christians of the East had learned to look toward him as their destined deliverer from the yoke of the Mohammedan oppressor; they, too, bewailed the shattering of these visionary hopes of theirs. And, if not mourned by his foes—it would have been too much to expect that they should lament the taking of such an adversary from their path—still it was most honourable to them and to him, that, in Germany at least, all violence of party hate appeared hushed for the moment in the presence of such a death.

during this interval in the Swedish and Saxon service; and then, a slight unstable man, no doubt also conscious of the suspicions with which he was regarded, took service with the Emperor once more.

To fling out at random such insinuations as these, with no reference to the thorough investigation which the whole question has obtained, and the evidence, decisive as I must count it, that the King fairly fell in a *mêlée*, is little worthy of an historian, and serves to mark him as one writing for sensation and effect, rather than as a sincere and simple seeker of the truth.

Gustavus Adolphus was in the ripe prime of manhood, only thirty-eight years old, when he died. He had been in Germany scarcely more than two years; but in a little while he had fulfilled a long age. As the star of Tilly had paled before him living, so, I need not remind you, the star of a mightier, of Wallenstein himself, paled before him dead. Some heavy disasters the cause of religious liberty and of the rights of conscience subsequently endured. Political objects and aims—the humbling the pride of the House of Austria—came more into the foreground, after the French took an open part with the Swedes and the Protestants of Germany; the whole tone of the war was in many ways lowered; but the work which he came to accomplish was done. And as good men are *often*, shall we not say *always*, happy, not in their deaths only, but in the opportunity of their deaths, he too was taken, as we may believe, from evil to come—taken certainly from the ingratitude of the Princes whom he had delivered—taken perhaps from that worst evil, which might have come upon him, the gradual mingling of lower motives with a lofty aim—the finishing (in part, at least) in the flesh what had been begun in the spirit, with God's glory becoming less, and his own glory becoming more, to him than it had been at the beginning. From the possibilities of all

this he was taken; and has left a name, than which there are few indeed that shine with a purer and brighter lustre in the firmament of fame.*

* I am acquainted with no cotemporary poetry of any great value, which was called out by Gustavus' career or death. A spirited ballad, some six or seven hundred lines long, with the date of 1633, was drawn from oblivion, and published with notes and Introduction under the title, *Das Gustav-Adolphs-Lied, von W. von Maltzahn.* Berlin: 1846. Yet this is nothing very wonderful, and would scarcely yield a better stanza than the following:—

Er liess sein Vatterlande,
Nam sich fremder Noth an,
Abriss Tyrannes Bande,
So lange er's Leben g'han:
Für's Vatterland zu streiten
Ist eine Schuldigkeit;
Sterben z' Nutz ander Leuthen
Ist sondre Dapfferkeit.

A shorter poem, but of greater merit than this, bewails the death of the young hero, Bernard of Saxe-Weimar. But the one really very grand popular ballad which the War produced celebrates Torstenson's great victory at Jankau, Feb. 24, 1645. It is full of the triumphant irony which comes so naturally to the conquerors; as when the poet assures the (Roman Catholic) vanquished that all the saints have become Swedish now. That it has the war-song's genuine ring, a stanza or two (the first and the sixth and seventh) will prove:—

Nun singet, nun springet mit fröhlichen Schalle,
Nun danket dem Herren, und preiset ihn alle!
Er hat grosse Dingegethan
Durch den theuren Dorstensohn.

Wo seid ihr, Helden, wo seid ihr geblieben,
Erwürget, erschlagen, verwundet, vertrieben!
Habt ihrs Herz, setzet wider an,
Eur erwart der Dorstensohn.

Ach nehmet die Flucht, Soldaten und Pfaffen,
Was ihr nur könnt zusammen raffen!
Was ihr anjetzt nicht bringet davon,
Das alles bekommt der Dorstensohn.

Both these poems will be found in Opel and Cohn's very interesting volume, *Der Dreissigjährige Krieg*, pp. 347, 351.

LECTURE II.

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR.

As the lecture which I am about to deliver to you will dwell much on some of the miseries which follow in the train of war, I may as well state at the outset that I am not a member of the Peace Society, and this for more reasons than one—for this first, that I am too true a lover of peace to be a member of a Society so provocative of war; and secondly, that prizing peace highly, there are other things which I trust always to prize even at a higher rate—truth, righteousness, national honour, national independence. All these seem to me more precious still, and even those costliest sacrifices which war demands not too high a price to pay for the maintenance of them.

At the same time, having regard to the widespread and deplorable revival of a war-spirit throughout the world, the result, no doubt, of the passing away of that generation which had

seen with its own eyes, and tasted by its own experience, what a great war meant and what it involved, I can think no words out of place, no effort, however humble, to be despised, which may serve to remind us of what therefore it may mean again. I have taken for my subject the *social* aspects of such a war, because, dreadful as may be the shock of contending hosts, the mutual destruction which they inflict upon each other, and more dreadful still, the ghastly aceldama which they leave behind them; yet neither this nor that is the dreadfullest of all. The social aspects of war, as it affects the non-combatants, as it finds out the weak and the helpless; its evil influences as they penetrate through all society, everywhere disturbing and disorganizing; its waste, its havoc, its disorder, its famine, its pestilence, and, worst of all, the scope which it gives to all savage and brutal natures to indulge themselves freely, the Butlers and Turchins whom it creates or reveals—it is this which deserves to be brought into fuller light, finding as it does little or no place in the pages of the historian. He on the stage which he has selected may cause to pass before our eyes a spectacle stately and solemn, itself mournful and tragic enough; but the ten thousand obscurer woes, the tragedies more real still, which are being enacted behind the scenes

and out of sight, he will give us scarcely a glimpse or hint of these.

It is from this point of view, and a little to supply this omission, that I propose to pourtray to you in a few rapid sketches what the Thirty Years' War did for Germany—in what condition found, and in what condition left it. In doing this I shall take for granted that you remember enough of my former lecture to make it unnecessary for me again to set before you the stage on which that protracted tragedy, which dragged its bloody length through very nearly the third part of a century, was acted; and as little who were the chief actors in it, or what the objects which they presented to themselves. All this I shall presume to be in outline sufficiently known.

The Thirty Years' War! How terrible a sound do these words, if we meditate upon them ever so little, carry with them! Suppose our Reform Bill had not been peaceably carried, and had issued in a civil war, which only two or three years back had found its termination, that would have been a thirty years' war. What a cup of pain was put to *our* lips in that late Russian War, which within two short years was brought to a close. And yet how altogether should we fail to realize the facts of the case, if we supposed that by multiplying two into

fifteen, and thus reaching thirty, we should at all represent to ourselves the loss, the ruin, the anguish of the War I speak of. It is quite another arithmetic which would enable us to realize these. Instead of a war at a distance of nearly two thousand miles, as was ours in the Crimea, imagine one which had raged among our own hearths and homes. Instead of a war with a foreign nation, suppose it had been one in which the children of our own soil, knit together by a thousand ties of blood and of language, had been ranged in fratricidal strife against each other. Suppose again, that as the strength of the land ebbed and decayed, foreign armies, under one plea or another, some as friends and allies, and some as foes, had stepped in, French, and Russian, and American, taking part on one side or the other, or rather seeking to make their gain out of our weakness and divisions, spoiling alike and with an entire impartiality those whom they professed to help and those whom they undertook to assail. Suppose that over and above the political motives which have been at the bottom of the great wars of the last two centuries, there had been superadded all the fierce hatreds which a religious war too surely engenders. Imagine all this to have gone on for thirty years—for the entire lifetime, that is, of one generation—

the flames of war dying down in one part of the land, but only because they had exhausted all on which they could feed, and anon blazing up in another—swaying hither and thither, backward and forward, scorching, blackening, consuming, leaving nothing but dead ashes behind them. Suppose, I say, all this had gone on, until by war, and its two attendant plagues, famine and pestilence, three-fourths of the population of England had perished, its twenty millions had been reduced to five millions, and of all other elements of wealth, power, and civilization a far larger proportion, villages innumerable to have for ever disappeared from the map, the very traditions of civilized life in some parts of the land to have wholly died out, —suppose all this, and you may just imagine a war which would endure in horror to be faintly compared with that which desolated Germany from 1618 to 1648.

At the time when the troubles which were gradually to take consistence and deepen into this frightful War commenced, Germany was rich and prosperous—probably richer and more prosperous in many districts than she ever since has been. The wars consequent on the Reformation, which had so wasted France and the Low Countries, had in the main spared her. She had only known the brief struggle of the

Protestant Electors with Charles the Fifth, and the insurrection of the peasants, both nearly a century old. She was now enjoying the rich accumulations of considerably more than half a century of almost uninterrupted peace. It is true that the glory of the Hanse towns was not what it once had been, and the wealth of India and the East no longer found its way by the Danube into Western Europe. But Germany was busy, industrious, opulent; if not very refined, yet full of solid wellbeing; with a vigorous municipal self-government, having retained in dress, in feasts, in amusements, in city shows, in amicable contests of the cross-bow and the arquebuss, much of the picturesque life of the middle ages. How all this wealth and prosperity, and much which was more precious than these, was not merely checked and diminished, but in great part to perish from the very roots, so to perish that much of it never again revived; this is the mournful yet not wholly unprofitable tale which is now to tell.

One may imagine the real though somewhat languid interest with which rumours of disturbances in the outlying kingdom of Bohemia were listened to in the years 1619 and 1620 by the rural population of Central and Northern Germany—this interest growing somewhat livelier, as it became plain that what was there at stake

was not merely a dynastic question, the right of succession to the Bohemian throne, but whether those of the Reformed Confession should retain the liberty of a free exercise of their faith; and then deepening into an earnest sympathy, as bands of fugitives, who had saved nothing but their lives, filled Western Germany with the woeful tale of their own sufferings, and the worse sufferings of many whom they had left behind. And yet how little they, as they listened with mingled alarm and indignation, or even those with far wider outlook than theirs, could have guessed that a volcano had opened there, whose crater should go on enlarging ever, westward to the Rhine and beyond it, northward to Holstein and Jutland, southward to the Tyrol,—wide as the whole fatherland, every region of which, this a little sooner, that a little later, should be scorched and devastated by it; that the child in the cradle should be a man of middle age before the War which was now beginning had ceased; that few among those of middle age should live to behold its close; and that they who did should be as the forlorn survivors of a catastrophe which had involved well-nigh everything which they held most dear in its ruin. Not however the War, with the steps by which it advanced from a local disturbance to a universal confusion, but the

reaction of the war on the people, it is this of which I would speak to you a little.

Here as elsewhere, the worst did not arrive at once. For a while some show and shadow of order was maintained amid all the disorder, license, and lawlessness which war can never be without. Huge contributions were levied on villages and open towns; often levied again and again, till they were reduced from plenty to poverty. Innumerable excesses were committed by a ruffian soldiery. Still it was not yet avouched and recognized that everything was permitted to them. The deadly hatred between the peasantry and the soldiers, which was afterwards such a direful source of wrongs and outrages innumerable, had not yet grown up, or had not yet reached that intensity which afterwards it attained. The attempt would be sometimes made to buy off the presence of troops by enormous gifts to their captains and commanders, to obtain what was called a *salva guardia* or safeguard from them; and so long as the inhabitants possessed anything to offer, these attempts would be partially successful; though, as the troops must live somewhere, the evil was in this way only shifted and not removed.

But after a little while, whatever limitations

of worst evil had for a while existed, disappeared; the feeble barriers which would have arrested it were thrown down. As the impoverishment of the land increased, harsher measures became necessary to extort from the population, now grown at once poorer and more desperate, the little which they still strove to retain for themselves. And then too, in the very nature of things, and 'by custom of fell deeds,' men, as war goes on, become worse and worse, more lawless, fiercer, crueller. Thus the strict discipline, resting upon the fear of God, which Gustavus brought with him from Sweden, and which he was so in earnest to maintain, did not endure above a year; already before his death it had sensibly deteriorated; and long before the end had come, I should imagine that there was little, if anything, to choose between the visitation of a Swedish army and an Imperialist. Indeed one of the worst tortures devised at this time for wringing a confession of anything which they had concealed from the miserable people, went by the name of 'The Swedish Drink;' implying, whether justly or not I know not, that it was of their invention.

Then too the composition of the armies was inevitably from bad to worse. This, which had been a civil war at the first, did not con-

tinue such for long; or rather it united presently all the dreadfulness of a civil war and a foreign. It was not long before the hosts which trampled the German soil had in great part ceased to be German; every region of Europe sending of its children, and, as it would seem, of those whom it must have been gladdest to be rid of, to swell the ranks of the destroyers. Germany was the carcase, and they were the vultures,—for 'eagles' they had no right to be called,—which were gathered round her for their prey. From all quarters they came trooping, not singly, but in whole battalions—on the Protestant side Swedes and Finns, Hollanders and Frenchmen, Englishmen and Scotchmen; on the Roman Catholic and Imperial side were ranged Spaniards and Italians and Walloons, adventurers from Ireland, representatives of nearly all the Slavonic tribes, Poles and Cossacks; and, most detested of all for their license and their savagery, the Croats, or Crabats, as they were usually called; whose name, by the way, you would hardly expect to meet in the cravat which we wear round the neck, originally a fashion of theirs, and from them named. All these came trooping in multitudes to the fields of war—it may be one here or one there eager to contend for the truth, or for what he esteemed to be the truth; though per-

haps only the fiercer and the crueller for this; but the most, by the readiness with which they changed sides, took service under one banner or the other, as this or that seemed to promise more of plunder or pay, declaring plainly that all which had attracted *them* was the liberty and license of war.

All armies draw after them a train of camp followers. They are a plague which in the very nature of things is inevitable. But never perhaps did this evil rise to so enormous a height as now. Toward the close of this War an Imperial army of forty thousand men was found to be attended by the ugly accompaniment of a hundred and forty thousand of these. The conflict had in fact by this time lasted so long that the soldiery had become as a distinct nation, camping in the midst of another; and the march of an army like that of some wild nomade horde, moving with wives and children through the land. And not with these only. There were others too in its train, as may easily be supposed: troops of unchaste women—readers of Walter Scott will remember Dugald Dalgetty's inopportune attempt to explain to the Lady of Ardenvohr the arrangements for preserving some sort of order among these—gangs of gipsies, hordes of Jewish sutlers, watching to make their gain by purchasing his booty from the soldier, with all

of wickedest and worst which the War had bred, or drawn by a too sure attraction to itself. Marauders too there were, 'soldiers of Count Merode,' or 'Merode's brothers,' as the plundering skulkers from the ranks were now called.* The foot soldier who had thrown away his musquet, the cavalry soldier who had sold or lost his horse, with many more who loved the license but shrank from the toil and danger of war—these, not so much seeking to gather up what the armies had left, for that would have been little, but to be the first where spoil was to be gotten or havoc made, were the evil harbingers of a worse evil behind. It is... a

* From which among the Count Merodes these derived their title is not so certain; for there were at least three of this name in the Imperial service, and all of them officers of evil repute, and notorious for the license which, exercising themselves, they also permitted to their followers. We may, I think, certainly conclude from some lines entitled *Merode's Remorse*, that one among them was popularly regarded as the cruellest and most remorseless among the many cruel and remorseless who for so many years ravaged and spoiled the German soil. These remarkable lines (they are to be found in Opel and Cohn's *Dreissigjährige Krieg*, p. 343) constitute a portion of a larger poem, *Heart Confessions*, as it is called, in which each of the chief actors in or abettors of the war, is made successively to utter, as in a Palace of Truth, the innermost thought of his heart. Merode, after recounting some of his deeds of rapine and blood, goes on to say—

Ach Gott, hät ich das bleiben lan,
Es möcht itz um mich besser stan!

thought to make one shudder, the passage of one of these armies with its foul retinue through some fair and smiling and well-ordered region—what it found and what it must have left it, and what its doings there had been. Bear in mind that there was seldom in these armies any attempt whatever at a regular commissariat; rations were never issued except to the actual soldiers, and most irregularly to them; and then it will be possible remotely to conceive what a weltering mass of misery endured and misery inflicted must have ever floated round such a camp as it moved.

And yet perhaps it was not the larger armies sweeping through the land which wrought the worst woe. Bad enough, they were yet but a passing plague; it was rather the network of armed posts, of the smaller garrisons estab-

Ich sah nicht an die heissen Zähren,
Die in den gülden Bechern warn;
Die Seufzer waren noch bedeckt,
Welche die Leut darin versteckt,
Itz stehn sie hie vor Gottes Thron,
Ganz freudig, wie mag das geschehn?
Sie klagen mich aufs heftigst an,
Was ich an ihnen hab gethan.
Kein Mann ist hie, der für mir spricht;
Des Papstes Schlüssel taugen nicht,
Sie g'hören nicht zür Himmels Thür,
Kein Jesuiter kömmt dafür,
Der mich zu sich da hol hinein,
Ich seh dass sie selbst nicht da sein.

lished in the country towns, in fortified villages, in churches, which, covering all the land, brought the miseries of war almost without intermission home to all. The historian of Lord Arundel's Embassy to Vienna with proposals of peace,* describes the whole country through which they moved as alive with Croats, by which name probably any plundering bands would have come soon to be called.

No wonder that in many a village or unwalled town, on the church-tower or on some other spot commanding a wide view of the country round, a watch would be kept night and day, ready to give earliest notice of the appearance of any hostile bands; and when I say hostile bands, you must remember that for the most part all bands were hostile, the soldiery recognizing no distinction between friend or foe, but with impartial cruelty robbing and torturing all alike, without any account taken of the Confession to which they belonged. The signal of their approach given, the entire population would take flight; whatever they could carry away, carrying this with

* *Earl of Arundel: Travels as Ambassador Extraordinary to the Emperor Ferdinando II. in* 1636. London: 1637. A most curious little volume by one of his suite, in which the strangest horrors, of which they were the eyewitnesses, are told in the quietest and most passionless way.

them; and then in the depth of the forests, in inaccessible morasses, in deserted quarries, in any spot where they could hope for a refuge and concealment, would wait, often for weeks, or even for months together, till the tyranny was overpast. We may faintly picture to ourselves all which under these conditions must have been suffered, from the inclemency of a German winter, from the want of all things; the old men, the delicate women, the tender babes who must have perished in these wild hiding-places, the memory of which is still traditionally handed down, and some of them in various parts of Germany shown even to the present day.

When the danger was for the moment over, and they ventured to return, it would be oftenest to black and smoking ruins; always to houses stript of everything which could be carried away; and what could not be carried away trodden under foot and so far as possible destroyed; for it was a rule to leave nothing to an after-comer, who might be an enemy. In vain had the most artful places of concealment been devised for the hiding of some precious objects, if any such still remained to hide; though when we read, as in Lord Arundel's *Travels*, of villages which had been plundered eight and twenty times, and some twice in one

day, there must soon have been very little to conceal. The skill of the finders was more than a match for that of the hiders. Water was poured everywhere on the ground; wherever it sunk rapidly into the earth, there something had recently been buried. Every wall was tapped with the butt-end of the musquet, that any hollow sound might betray the cunningly contrived recess, with the little hoard which had there been lodged. The church vaults had been burst open, the coffins broken in pieces, for in such loathsome receptacles, among the very bones of the dead, it was sometimes sought to conceal a little remnant of food. All had been discovered, and all swept away.

This War has left a very characteristic deposit in our language in the word 'plunder,' which first appeared in English about the year 1642–3, having been brought hither from Germany by some of the many Scotch and English, who had served therein; for so Fuller assures us.* 'Cotemporary,' he says, 'with malignant was the word plunder, which some make of Latin original, from planum dare, to level, plane all to nothing. Others make it of Dutch [that is of German] extraction, as if it were to plume or pluck the feathers of a bird to the bare skin. Sure I am we first heard thereof in the Swedish

* *Church History*, 1643.

wars, and if the name and thing be sent back from whence it came few English eyes would weep thereat.' Take, let me say by the way, Fuller's information, but leave his etymology. Heylin confirms this account, giving the word exactly the same date, though without tracing it to Germany. 'Plunder,' he writes, 'both name and thing, was unknown in England till the beginning of the war.' Whether the thing had been so unknown in other previous wars which in 'our rough island story' are recorded, I should take leave very much to doubt; but doubtless the name was new.

When these things were being done, you may easily imagine the savage class hatred which ere long grew up between the soldiers and the boors. It was one of the most dreadful features of the war, and added unspeakably to its horrors. For the boor the soldier was a natural enemy, and for the soldier the boor. It needed but a few mutual provocations for each to seek to inflict upon the other the deadliest injuries in his power. And though in this rivalry of hate it would inevitably happen that the peasantry suffered far the most, yet not so but that they sometimes tasted the sweetness of revenge. Lurking in the woods, they hung on the skirts of armies, above all of armies defeated and retreating, watching for stragglers,

for marauders, for sick and wounded who dropt behind, putting such as fell into their hands to death with every device of cruelty and insult which rude men, maddened by wrong, could imagine; again drawing on themselves or on others of their own class retaliations of cruelty which sought to transcend theirs. An English officer who fought at Lützen no doubt exaggerates, when he states that twice as many of Wallenstein's army perished in the retreat to Bohemia by the hands of the boors as in the battle itself;* but that such a report could be current attests how active their enmity was, and how deadly, when opportunity arrived, it might prove. What manner of retort the soldiers of Wallenstein made upon this occasion on the boors may be read in the *Swedish Intelligencer*. A wonderful account of one of these hideous circles of outrage and wrong (it would not bear to be quoted) may be found in *Simplicissimus*, the German *Gil Blas*, a book which yields a picture of the strange, wild, utterly dislocated and demoralized life of the time, such as a hundred volumes of history would fail to afford.

I shall not harrow your feelings with any details of the cruelties which were wrought,

* *Letter from George Fleetwood*, published by the Camden Society, vol. i.

oftenest by the soldiers, on the suffering population; sometimes in mere wantonness, sometimes by way of retaliation, most frequently as a means of extorting hid treasures, which, if they had ever existed, most probably had vanished long ago. There is very much which I could not report, and much which, though not absolutely untellable, had yet better remain untold. One thing I will venture to relate, fearfully illustrative as it is of that development of the purely devilish, which ever goes hand in hand with the development of the bestial in man. A time arrived, when to kill men's bodies seemed too little, unless their souls could be killed as well; and thus it was a not unusual pastime to promise life to some unhappy victim, on the condition that he would deny his faith, or blaspheme God. This wrung, as it would too often be, from the terror-stricken wretch, then, profiting by a wicked quibble which lay in the form of the promise, to kill him in his sin—that is, to kill, as it was hoped, and with the same stroke, body and soul together.

How often, in reading the records of that time, one is reminded of that characteristic of men who have reached the extremity of wickedness, which St. Paul gives, 'inventors of evil things;' how often too of that mysterious

and most fearful alliance between cruelty and impurity, 'lust hard by hate,' which is one of the darkest, and at the same time most constantly recurring, phenomena of our fallen nature. But enough concerning these horrors, which were yet so marked a feature of the time that all reference to them could not have been omitted.

It is not merely the ill actually endured, but the ill impending, the sense of utter insecurity which, at times like those, takes all joy out of the lives of men. Soon it became evident that there was no safety in almost any remoteness from that which might be the scene of warfare at the actual moment. When all within their immediate neighbourhood was wasted, armed bands in various disguises, as merchants, as gipsies, as travellers, or sometimes as women, would penetrate far into the land; by aid of treacherous intelligence which they had before obtained, and which there were always those ready to give, would surprise and carry off the richer inhabitants of the small towns and villages, compel them to ransom themselves, torturing, oftentimes to death, those who refused or who were unable to produce the sums demanded of them. You may perhaps remember, or, if you do not remember, you will thank me for bringing to your knowledge, some lines in Henry

Taylor's *Philip Van Artevelde*, which very grandly describe a condition of things such as lately existed in many a border district of Missouri and Tennessee, such as must have then existed over large regions of Germany:—

> 'Make fast the doors; heap wood upon the fire;
> Draw in your stools, and pass the goblet round;
> And be the prattling voice of children heard;
> Now let us make good cheer—but what is this?
> Do I not see, or do I dream I see,
> A form, which midmost in the circle sits,
> Half visible, his face deformed with scars
> And foul with blood—Oh yes, I know it: there
> Sits DANGER with his feet upon the hearth.'

Nor was the condition of the larger towns much better. It is true that the disorganization of society cannot have been so complete in them as in the country parts; yet their state also was miserable in the extreme. It did not need actual siege or capture to make them acquainted with some of the miseries of the time. Cut off by the near approach of hostile armies from the neighbouring country, their industry interrupted, all their sources of wealth dried up, oftentimes crowded with multitudes driven from their homes and possessions, camping in the streets or open places, and bringing with them want and disease, they had a foretaste in these of worse sufferings behind; were singed and scorched by the flames of war even

when not consumed by them. Thus in 1637, after the taking of Torgau, twelve thousand waggons filled with fugitives arrived in the space of three days at Dresden. A pestilence which the fugitives brought with them, or which was engendered by their crowded miserable condition, swept away half the inhabitants of the Saxon capital.

But the cities did not long escape a nearer familiarity with the havoc and scourge of war. They were besieged, some, as Leipsic, five times, or as Magdeburg, six. The varying fortunes of the struggle caused them to be taken and retaken many times over, and generally, as almost all towns were then fortified, after a siege of longer or shorter duration. Not many, it is true, having been taken by assault, endured such horrors as this was considered to justify; horrors such as have made the sack of Magdeburg a by-word for all the worst which could be endured or inflicted under such conditions. Yet besides this, which has become a cry to heaven for ever, other cities, Frankfort on the Oder for example, could have told terrible stories of a similar kind. But even in the city rendered by compact, and not taken by storm, everything needed to be redeemed, which the citizens would not see carried away or destroyed. *Brandschatz*, as it was called,

must be paid, ransom, that is, for the city itself, if the conquerors refrained from reducing it to ashes. Letters requiring this are still in existence, scorched at the four corners, as a sort of menace and prophecy of the doom awaiting the receiver who did not comply with their demands. The church bells were the perquisite of the artillery. The organ, the city library, every object to which any value could be attached, the trees which adorned the city walks, if they were not to be cut down and sold for firewood, must each and all be severally redeemed; and many times over, it might be, during the progress of the long War. Where the ransom was larger than could all be raised at once, and the army was on the move, the chief citizens would be carried away as hostages till the stipulated sum had been paid.

Under conditions like these, it is not wonderful that the fields were left nearly or altogether untilled—for who would sow what he could never hope to reap?—or that famine, thus invited, should before long have arrived. In 1636-1637, the dearth in many districts was so extreme, that not merely things coarse and unfit for human food, having little or no nourishment, as bread made of acorns, were eagerly devoured; but persons were found dead in the

fields with grass in their mouths; that the tanners' yards were beset for the putrid carcases of beasts: but all those stories which we read with a half incredulous shudder, the crowning horrors of Numantia and Jerusalem, found their parallels, and worse than their parallels, in Christian Germany only two centuries ago. Men climbed up the gibbets, and tore down the bodies which were suspended there, and devoured them. This, indeed, was a supply which was not likely to fail. At Bruck, a once prosperous town in Moravia, where Lord Arundel found only four households of the living remaining, he found also 'a gallows and scaffold by the way, whereon the burghers of the town suffered, and many hanging still, who were Lutherans.' Elsewhere, as at Mentz, he had seen divers poor persons 'lying on dunghills, almost starved, being scarcely able to receive his Excellency's alms.'

It became necessary in some parts to set watches in the churchyards, lest the newly-buried corpses should in like manner be dug up again for food. The sextons were approached with miserable bribes that they would permit this. This also, namely a dead body scraped out of the grave, one can scarcely suppose with any other intention, Lord Arundel saw, though the account is not very clear. Children were enticed

away, wayfaring men hunted down in the fields and slain that they might be eaten. Near Worms, in 1637, a company of beggars were surprised making their cannibal repast round a huge fire in the open country; in the cauldron where their food was preparing, were found the arms and thighs of a man.* And the War was to last eleven years more!

Districts which had for centuries been in the occupation of civilized men were repossessed by forests, and these so vast, that while before this time fears were continually expressed lest the forests of Germany should be utterly exhausted, from this date forward these apprehensions cease altogether. And wild beasts, wolves above all, multiplied in these, or, bolder yet, housed in the villages, which had been wholly abandoned by their inhabitants. The cotemporary records tell a strange and hideous story of a peasant venturing to return to his abandoned house, hoping to recover from his cellar a few pieces of money which he had buried in it, and finding the entrance disputed by a she-wolf, which with her brood had harboured there, and had already dragged into her den the carcase of more than one wayfarer. Or sometimes there would lurk in these now desolate places worse

* *Theatrum Europæum*, 1637, p. 778.

than wild beasts, murderers or murderesses. Two of these last we are told of, who haunted the ruins of a village, lying in wait there for the lives of any who might return to gather up some fragment of what once was theirs.

Where there is famine, it will not be long before pestilence follows in its track. And here too it came to pass that where battle slew its tens, and famine its hundreds, pestilence slew its thousands. The waste of the population, and the rapidity of the waste—many causes no doubt contributing, but this the chiefest—is something so frightful as to be scarcely credible. When Lord Arundel passed Wesel on the Rhine, they were dying there of the plague at the rate of more than thirty a day. The population of Würtemberg sunk from nearly half a million to less than fifty thousand, and this was the work of only a few years, for the War was far advanced before this region was touched by it. And by that just backstroke of vengeance which we so often trace in the moral history of the world, those who inflicted the woe were not seldom brought to taste also themselves in turn the woe which they inflicted; the cup of pain which they had presented to the lips of others being in turn presented to their own. Entire armies, which had never seen a foe, melted away

and disappeared from the earth before the wasting pestilence. It would be hard to imagine a more significant contrast than that which existed between the wild and riotous wassail of the soldiery during the earlier years of the contest, while as yet they were prodigally using up the hoarded wealth of the land, accumulated through long years of peace and prosperity, and the dreadful silence which in the later periods of the conflict reigned among the spectre-like and famishing hordes, camping in their pestilence-stricken huts on the untilled desolate wastes, or among the blackened ruins of villages long ago forsaken by their inhabitants.

This War, as it was fruitful in all other miseries, so it did not want those which an enormous tampering with the currency inevitably draws in its train. All the Princes of Germany, beginning in a state of insolvency that pastime which the Greek proverb declares to be sweet only to those who have never tried it, quickly found themselves at their wits' end to meet the huge outlays which it required. Inconvertible paper money, Pitt's one-pound note, Lincoln's greenback, had not yet been invented. Something, however, might still be done. The silver dollar could be alloyed with copper, and still with more copper—might at length be nothing else but copper with a slight

silver wash; and this meaner metal, still bearing the same name, might continue, for so it was fondly hoped, to do all the work of the nobler which it had superseded. The experiment was tried, and at first appeared eminently successful; although, mysteriously enough, the old silver dollars, as though unable to endure the meaner companionship into which they were thus brought, at once, and as if by magic, wholly vanished out of sight. It was curious; but for a while excited little uneasiness; for indeed everybody seemed growing richer by this incident of the War. Where before there was one dollar stirring, now there were five or ten. And what came easily went easily; there was no difficulty in borrowing money; nobody haggled at the price which he was called on to pay for anything.

Presently, however, the gain was not found to be so unmingled. A day of disenchantment was not long in arriving. All commodities rose rapidly in price, until ten dollars would not purchase what one dollar had purchased two years before. It was in vain that the cities established, as in the French Revolution, a maximum, or fixed price, for commodities, more than which it was not lawful to demand. This measure did not mend matters, but rather made them worse; its only consequence being,

that the bakers would not bake bread, the butchers would not kill meat, the farmers would not bring corn to the market. And presently loud cries were heard from those who had fixed incomes, many of them among the most useful persons in the land; from the village pastor; from the country schoolmaster, no longer able to exist on their modest stipends; from the poor students at the Universities, a very numerous class, whose exhibitions were now wholly inadequate to keep body and soul together; from all who, living on the interest of money, saw beggary instead, it might be, of opulence their portion; from creditors whose debtors repaid them sums nominally the same as they had borrowed, but in reality less by four-fifths or nine-tenths.

Amid the ruin and wide waste of war, all this may seem but a slight calamity, and hardly worthy of commemoration. But indeed financial catastrophes like these are among the worst mischiefs of such evil times, breaking down the moral sense of a people, giving a kind of legal sanction to acts felt to be dishonest, turning honourable citizens into gamblers. Add to all this the ignoble passions which they arouse, the discord they introduce into the heart of families, the fierce antagonism which they put between one class and another; and you will not wonder

that after the crash had arrived, and the bursting of the inflated bubble of a deceitful prosperity (this took place early, about the year 1623), the Kippers and Wippers * (for by these new names the speculators in this debased money, who had contrived to make their fortune out of the ruin of almost everybody else were called) —that these, I say, were held in an abhorrence almost equal to the Pandour and the Croat; so that, long after the War had ended, there was no worse blot on any man's reputation than to be supposed to have made his wealth in the shameful speculations of that time.

The intolerable sufferings, some of which I have endeavoured thus faintly to pourtray to you, drew after them mischiefs which were worse even than the sufferings themselves, a demoralization which extended to every class of society; for, indeed, they are only a few who can endure, without being made worse by it, the last extremity of ill, above all when that ill must be borne not for an instant, but for years. A few elect souls are exalted, purified, made white in this seven times heated furnace of trial; but very

* From two provincial words, *kippen* to clip, and *wippen* to fling, i.e. the heavy money from the scales. There is a very excellent ballad, *Kipp—Wipp—und Münzer Lied*, of date 1632, in which their luxury and insolence is taxed, and their approaching ruin announced, in Opel and Cohn's *Dreissigjährige Kricg*, p. 423.

many, whom afflictions in measure would have profited, break down under the stress of a temptation too mighty for their weak strength and weak faith to endure. So it has been ever found; so it proved here.

The village population, plundered themselves, turned plunderers in their turn, formed themselves into bands, and inflicted on other districts the injuries which they had endured themselves —the first foundations being probably here laid of those robber bands which plagued Germany for a century after the termination of the War. Men suffered so much themselves that they became wholly indifferent to the sufferings of others, better pleased to enhance than to alleviate these. Those who anywhere possessed anything, sought at once to enjoy it; for why reserve it, not for themselves, but for the spoiler? There grew up a fierce lust after immediate gratification; for what moment but the immediate present could anyone count for his own? and strange untimely revelries were not wanting, counterparts of those dances of death which make hideous the story of Athens, of Florence, of Marseilles, and of other cities stricken with the plague. Some laid violent hands on themselves, or on others the dearest to them, as counting that any world must be more tolerable than this, any hereafter than

this present. Others openly turned atheists, refusing to believe, if indeed there were a God in heaven, that He would keep silence while such horrors were being enacted upon earth.

In reading the story of a desolation like this, at once moral and material, the thoughtful student will sometimes ask himself how it came to pass that anything survived; that the very germs of a future civilization, of a Germany such as we now behold, were not quite and for ever trodden out. All who have intimately studied the history of these times acknowledge how much was here owing to the Church. The glimpses which we obtain of the Lutheran and Reformed Clergy, at the close of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century, do not always present them to us in a very attractive point of view. They were contentious, word-warriors, over-prompt to discern a heretic, in their theological disputes with one another or with Romanists frightfully abusive, not a little given to domineer over consciences. But it must be owned that in this time of extreme trial they came nobly forth. I would not for an instant imply that the Roman Catholic priesthood were not as true to their flocks as the Protestant to theirs; but they were not at all so much addicted to writing and publishing; and consequently have left far fewer records behind them.

Of the Protestant Clergy several hath bequeathed to us curious, and some very touching records of their own experiences during the War. Depending in part on free-will offerings, in part on such as it was easy to withhold, they were among the first to feel the utter impoverishment of the land, with the ever-increasing lawlessness and contempt of every obligation which went hand in hand with this; and the bitterest poverty, hunger and nakedness, were the portion of many among them. Then too, while all the weak and helpless and unarmed were exposed to terrible outrage, there were none so fitted to concentrate the uttermost of all this upon themselves as the Clergy of the Reformed Faith. Yet there are no signs of any consequent shrinking upon their parts from their posts of duty and of danger—many signs to the contrary. Entries in the Church-books of many a parish, which may be read to this present day, attest how manfully they stood by their people, oftentimes till the whole congregation had melted away and disappeared. When the bells were carried off, they went round and summoned their flock to public prayer by word of mouth; when the church was burnt down, or so wrecked and defiled as to be unfit for divine offices, they brought them together in barns, in open fields,

or in the deep recesses of the forest; and only ceased their ministry when, as frequently would happen, there actually remained no people to whom to minister any more.

There is scarcely one of the eminent theologians of Germany belonging to this time, whom we do not find, when we become acquainted at all with his personal history, to have been burnt out of house and home, perhaps more than once; and sometimes with extreme personal danger and distress; chased at the least from his parish or his professor's chair, to wander for long years a fugitive and an exile through the land. Thus John Gerhard, the author of the greatest dogmatic work of the post-Reformation Lutheran theology, who, high in Court favour, must have had more to lose than could have been the lot of his brethren in general, had his farms devastated and burnt, and all the cattle swept away by his Lutheran co-religionists, the Swedes; and when a little later the Imperialists entered Jena, his house was by them stript well-nigh bare. All this however was little by comparison with what others went through.

I will relate to you here some passages in the life of John Valentine Andreä, an admirable Lutheran divine, and one of the most original writers in Germany, 'a rose among

thorns' Herder calls him, who did much to revive his well-nigh forgotten name among his fellow-countrymen. The loss of the battle of Nordlingen (1636), where the Swedish arms suffered so disastrous an overthrow, brought miseries unutterable on Würtemberg. Calw, a small but flourishing town, where Andreä exercised his ministry, was thoroughly plundered by a robber army under a notorious partisan, John de Wirth, and then set on fire; all the outlets having first been carefully stopped, that so the inhabitants might perish, as large numbers of them did, in the flames. Andreä indeed with his family, having fled before the arrival of the enemy, escaped this doom. They wandered for several days and nights in the neighbouring woods and fields, together with a multitude of hungry, naked, and starving, in like evil case with themselves—with difficulty concealing themselves from bands of soldiers, who everywhere were hunting the fugitives to kill them.

When the first fury of the assault had spent itself a little, he returned to find his own home with the chief part of the city in ashes, all that he possessed, which included a valuable library, consumed, and an enemy in occupation, as he continued to be for years, of the ruins which remained. Sheltering himself

in a wretched hovel in the suburbs, surrounded with the dying and the dead (for there, as elsewhere, pestilence had followed hard on the heels of famine, as famine on the heels of war), he addressed himself almost single-handed to the bringing of some order out of the hideous disorder round him, to the office of a comforter, where all around him was comfortless despair. Cut off from all intercourse with friends at a distance who might have helped him, with no means of his own, he yet got together, by prayers and entreaties and reproaches, food and medicine and some sort of attendance for the sick; established an Orphans' Home for a multitude of desolate children, and when this was full, persuaded such of the citizens as had saved anything to take others into their houses, bringing all of them daily together for school and worship; pleaded with the hostile authorities for the ill-fated city; reminded the weak Prince of the land of duties which still remained for him to perform; sought to maintain such Church discipline as was possible amid the dissolution of the ties which held society together, the demoralization at once of laity and clergy which was advancing with ever more rapid strides. The only minister of God's word and sacraments who survived—for two others had been carried off by the pestilence—he brought

to the dying the consolations of the Gospel, and within a few months himself followed to their graves with the last offices of the Church some seven hundred of his fellow-citizens, whom the same pestilence had swept away. The tide of success, when it again turned in favour of the Protestants, at first brought to him and his no relief, but rather an aggravation of ill; for flying bands of Imperialists passing through the city, enraged by defeat, and now quitting it for ever, made a second sweep of all which had escaped the first wreck, or had since been painfully got together; and on this second occasion Andreä had again to fly, and again barely escaped with his life.

The records which others have left behind them want the dignity which this story of Andreä possesses, the narrators being more occupied in recording their own sufferings than how they sought to alleviate the sufferings of others. Such is the character of a curious autobiography which a poor country parson, Bötzinger by name, has left. Take a very brief summary of what he passed through in a single day. Certainly it was one of his worst days; but many others were nearly, and some perhaps quite as full of outrage and wrong as this was. Having fled from Heldburg before a party of Imperial cavalry, he too wandered under very much the

same distressing conditions as Andreä had done, in the neighbouring woods for several days. After a while, encouraged by the fortunate event which attended the attempt of others, he resolves to return and secure, if possible, some three hundred dollars, which he has concealed against an evil day under the floor of his house, and which, in the terror of his first flight, he had not ventured to carry with him. Scarcely has he slipt within the gates, when some troopers, who had been evidently on the watch, lay hold upon him, and at once set him to fodder and water their horses. Defeated in an attempt to evade his captors, he is this time well beaten with swords and bandoliers, fast tied with ropes, and so carried round the city that he may point out the houses of the richer inhabitants, which as such might repay a more thorough scrutiny and overturning for the discovery of any hid valuables concealed in them; among others he is carried to his own, where he sees lying empty on the floor the copper vessel which had contained his little treasure, and learns to what small profit he has run into the lion's jaws. Refusing to betray any, he receives a cut over the head from a cutlass, which, as it covered him with blood, might have rendered superfluous another, to prove whether he was 'fast,' that is invulne-

rable, as many were supposed, through compact with the devil, to be. Twice within an hour the Swedish Drink, made more disgusting than common, is forced down his throat, all the teeth in his head being loosened in his attempts to resist it. At length his tormentors resolve to drown him, but at the same time to have some sport in the drowning. Flinging him into the river, one holding the rope which bound his feet, and another that which was fastened round his left arm, they drag him up and down until they are weary; they then let go the ropes, calculating that he is so exhausted as that he must sink at once. Borne by the current beyond their reach (I do not quite understand the localities, but a mill on the river serves him in good stead), he cuts the cords by aid of a small penknife which he has managed to retain, his tormentors the meanwhile with sticks and tiles and brickbats endeavouring to complete their work. For four or five hours he hides among some willow-bushes in the stream; and then at nightfall crawls away with a body so bruised and swollen that, although the road was strewn with articles of dress, the castaway wreck and plunder of the day, for some of which he would fain have exchanged his own torn and soaking garments, he is quite unable to stoop and pick them up; must indeed have his own clothes cut

off from him by one who affords him at length the shelter of a night. Such is a brief abridgement of one of poor Bötzinger's days; there are others, as I have said, nearly as bad, in some respects worse; nor is there any reason to doubt that many a *Dorf-prediger* could have told a story of cruelty and outrage which would quite have equalled his.

And yet, with all this, one fact is most notable, as a sign of the temper in which this great tribulation was met by those who had to drink of its cup of pain deeper perhaps than any other. This I mean, namely that very many, and these among the most glorious compositions in the hymnbook of Protestant Germany, date from the period of the Thirty Years' War. 'Many men,' as a poet of our own has said,

> 'Are cradled into poetry by wrong,
> And learn in suffering, what they teach in song.'

So was it here; and as this was a time full of suffering and wrath and wrong, so was it also a time when sacred song, which since Luther had shown comparatively little vitality, burst forth in a new luxuriance; and, most notable of all, is rich not so much, as one might have expected, in threnes and lamentations, *Misereres* and cries *de profundis* (though these also are not wanting), as in *Te Deums* and *Magnificats*, hymns of high hope and holy joy, rising up

from the darkness of this world to the throne of Him 'who giveth songs in the night,' and enables his servants to praise Him even in the fires—some among the chief sufferers, Paul Gerhard for instance, and Schirmer (the German Job as he called himself, with allusion to all that he had gone through) being the chief lyrists as well.*

How was it possible, some will ask, that this conflict should have continued so long; that while we in England managed in some four years to get through our great cotemporary struggle, this should have dragged on its horrid length for the entire lifetime of a generation, and ceased rather from an absolute impossibility to carry it on any longer than from any other cause? That it probably would take this course, the statesmanlike vision of Gustavus Adolphus had anticipated from a very early date. In a letter to Oxenstiern, bearing date June 2, 1630, that is, eighteen years before the end—'It seems to me,' he writes, 'that this whole War will draw out into length, and will be finished rather *tædio et morâ* than *impetu*.'

Its original purpose, namely, the suppression of the Protestant faith; and as the Emperor,

* See *Das Evangelische Trostlied um die Zeit des Dreissigjährigen Krieges*, von D. C. Roosen. Dresden, 1862.

but by no means all his allies, had hoped, with this an immense increase of the central Imperial authority, a recovery of all which for some centuries had been slipping away from its grasp, this had manifestly become hopeless from the period of the victories of Gustavus; that is, ere it had half run its course. By this time however it was not free to those who had begun to leave off with a confession of the futility of their attempt. Other interests were now engaged; other objects had risen up before the combatants. There were also other combatants. What was at first a German had become a European question.

It was harder still to leave off, when it became only too evident that, as far as Germany was concerned, nobody was to be a winner, but all to be losers alike; that, in addition to all the lives, and all the wealth, and all the well-being, which had been flung into the bottomless pit of war, and there lost for ever, new sacrifices of money, of territory, of influence, had still to be made as the only price of peace—those whom her weakness had encouraged and allowed, refusing to quit their grasp, until she had compensated them for all they had inflicted upon her. Herein her case was a hard one. It was wittily likened by Calixtus, one of her most celebrated divines, to that of a burgher of Leipsic, over whose

head a Swedish soldier broke his sword, and then sued him for the price of the weapon which he had broken. This in small was indeed very much the case of Germany in large. There were many moments indeed when peace might have been made; but these profited nothing, when at each such opportunity those who for the moment had the better counted that it was folly to pause in the career of victory, and the worsted that it was baseness not to endeavour to repair their fortunes by another effort; when the winners would not rise from the table because they hoped that their present good fortune would continue to attend them, and that they might win all; and the losers because they trusted by some turn of fortune to repair the losses which they had sustained.

What was the character of the claims, what sort of compensation was expected from her, you will best be able to judge when I mention that among the items of the bill presented by the Swedes, and without the payment of which they were resolved not to loosen their hold on the land, that which they put still in the forefront was the death of their great King, they not merely being willing but demanding to have this loss assessed and expressed in rix dollars. Of the five millions of crowns which

by the Treaty of Westphalia it was agreed should be wrung out of the exhausted land and paid to the Swedish army, a part, I do not know how much, was meant to represent this loss.

Those however who had sat down to the game, thinking to sweep the board, could ill endure to rise up from it, not merely winning nothing, but having incurred an enormous loss. Almost anything seemed better than to acknowledge this as the issue of all. For indeed many a war, and this among them, has dragged on its miserable length for years after the objects with which it was commenced were clearly unattainable; because those on whom the responsibility of having begun it lay have shrunk in their pride from owning that the objects of the war were impossible from the first; that it was therefore a most hideous mistake ever to have commenced it; that all the treasure and all the blood which it had cost had been lavished utterly in vain. Better to go forward, to pour more treasure, more blood into the ever-yawning gulf, to hope against all hope for some unlooked-for turn of fortune which should yet justify the past, than to make so terrible a confession as this.

Then, too, one of the worst consequences of a protracted war is that there grows up in it a

generation to which war has become a second nature—which has never known any other life but that of rapine and violence and sword-law, to which the blessings of peace are unknown, the very name of peace, with all the restraints which it will impose on their savage and brutal natures, is hateful. So was it here. We have authentic accounts of the fierce indignation with which the tidings that peace was at length signed were received by the armies, as by men who accounted that they had acquired a vested right to go on spoiling and robbing for ever. They had become by this time a class by themselves, with interests of their own; in fact armed nations camping in the midst of an unarmed.* And though gathered under hostile banners, they were agreed in this, that they alike regarded this wretched unarmed population as their prey. In some sort they understood one another. They would fight indeed, if brought face to face; but with no deadly animosity, and

* We have a singular proof of the extent to which the armies were recognized as independent bodies, in the fact that they had their own representatives at Osnabruck and Munster, the two Westphalian cities where the negotiations for peace went forward. It was exactly as if, after Waterloo, there had been at Vienna representatives of the Duke of Wellington's army, of Blucher's, and of what remained of the French, as well as of England, Prussia, and France.

as those who, on this side to-day, might be on the opposite to-morrow, and whose common trade in blood constituted a certain bond between them. It was indeed one of the ugliest features of the War that the cruelty and ferocity of the soldiery was not so much for one another—many stately courtesies would pass between *them*—but was all or nearly all reserved for the weak and the helpless, for the citizen and the peasant, the woman and the child.

Then further, when we are asking ourselves how the War could have continued so long, no doubt in its later periods the very exhaustion of Germany, being common to both sides, seriously contributed to this. On neither side was there strength enough remaining to strike a decisive blow. The armies became ever smaller, as it became ever more and more impossible either to recruit or to feed them, sometimes consisting nearly or altogether of cavalry, as the only troops who could even hope to gather the means of subsistence. The military operations became ever feebler and more desultory, the results ever more inconclusive, though the misery of the wretched inhabitants who survived did not therefore diminish. But there was not now strength enough left in the desolated land for any vigorous cry to ascend for peace. There were few to cry, and they felt

the uselessness of crying. War had gone on so long, there seemed no reason why it should not go on for ever. And thus, while in its earlier and middle period complaints, remonstrances, gradually deepening into voices of anguish, make themselves heard in a thousand flying leaves, pamphlets, and the like, for the last eight years there is nothing of the kind. A silence ghastlier than the wildest voices of pain and agony broods over the whole land, the silence of death and of an utter despair. It was not that it was suffering less; on the contrary, it was, if possible, suffering more; it was only that the woe had become speechless now.

When at length the end did arrive, when the diplomatists had settled their innumerable points of etiquette, some of which had delayed the negociations for months, almost for years together, and Germany sought to take account of her losses, it was not altogether impossible to form a rude and rough estimate of what her material losses had been. The statistics, as far as they were got together, tell a terrible tale. Of the population it was found that three-fourths, in some parts a far larger proportion, had perished. Thus in one group of twenty villages, which had not exceptionally suffered, eighty-five per cent. or four-fifths of

the population had disappeared;—Frederick the Great, by the way, thought it much that one in nine had been lost to Prussia during his great struggle;—of the horses and large cattle about the same proportion; while there, as throughout the whole of the country, the sheep had been wholly swept away. Of the houses three-fourths were destroyed, of those which remained standing the greater part were in a ruinous condition. Large numbers had been unroofed by the inhabitants to avoid a tax which would have been otherwise levied upon them. The author to whom I am indebted for this statement, after a careful calculation arrives at the conclusion that this district at the present day has just attained the population, the agricultural wealth, the productive powers which it had when the War commenced—that in fact in all these elements of prosperity it had been thrown back more than two hundred years.

We are wont not unfrequently to comfort ourselves in the contemplation of the huge and terrible waste of war with the thought that, deep as are the wounds which it inflicts, they presently heal again, and often leave not so much as a scar behind them; that the material damage which it brings with it is soon made good; while the discipline of pain through which it has caused a nation to pass has a most

salutary influence on the after development of a people's life—that it will have won a strength in war which will enable it to win the more blessed victories of peace, as it could never otherwise have won them. This no doubt is oftentimes most true. We have not seldom to admire the recovery, almost inconceivably rapid, of a people from the wreck and ruin, the depopulation, the destruction of external prosperity, which a war has caused. But then, if it is to be thus, the wounds must not have been *too* deep, the vital energies must not have been wasted too far. Above all, a people, however worsted, must have come out with something of honour from the conflict; for nations as well as men live by the unseen; of a nation as of a man it may be asked, A wounded spirit who can bear? Exactly such a wounded spirit was here. Indeed it is not too much to say that the heart of Germany was broken, and no wonder—maimed, abridged, humiliated, as she was—herself having had the least voice in the settlement of her own dearest affairs; even those who had gained their point, namely the Protestants, having gained it far more by the arms of the stranger than their own; and not for a century did she even begin to be heart-whole again. The immense value to Germany of Frederick the Great and of Rossbach was that

they gave her back that self-respect which for a dreary century intervening she had been without, and to want which is as disastrous for a nation as for a man.

And thus, from all these causes, so far from making good her losses in a few years, as did Prussia after the Seven Years' War, so far from the pulses of her life beating presently as strongly as ever, those who have studied the subject the deepest have no hesitation in declaring that in many ways Germany has never recovered the wounds which she then inflicted on herself, and invited others to inflict upon her; that the War destroyed much which has never revived again, left a feebleness behind it in many regions of the national life, above all of the political life, such as will explain many of her shortcomings and deficiencies which at the present day are so painfully apparent, that many elements of civilization then perished, which have never since been recovered; that the line of the continuity of the nation's life was then snapped, and that the broken threads have never been thoroughly reunited again. I believe they have perfect right in these conclusions of theirs. A terrible gulf lay between the present and the past. The whole manner of existence of the nation had become poorer, meaner than before.

It was evidently so in outward things. Everything which could perish had perished. Where was now the carved oak furniture in the house of the boor, the heirloom of many generations? It had long ago supplied fuel for the bivouac, or been smashed in the mere lust of destruction. And the massive silver goblet? It had found its way into the knapsack of the Croat or the Swede. Where now the glorious village church, built when Gothic art was in its prime, with its musical peal of bells, its gorgeous windows of stained glass? Fenced round as almost all the churches of Germany were by a strong wall, it had invited ruin by its manifest fitness for a post of defence. Having been turned by one side or the other into an extempore fortress, it had been battered with artillery; or it had been burned or blown up, so to dislodge a party of the enemy who defended themselves to the last from the roof or tower—its place to be hereafter supplied by that type of poverty and meanness, the village country church of Germany as we behold it now.

Where too were now the festal gatherings, the great shooting matches with arquebuss and cross-bow, which had been so frequent in the century preceding, when at the invitation of some wealthy city, offering rich prizes to the

winners, and bounteous entertainment to all, the competitors from some fifty cities, far and near, would accept the challenge, and in friendly rivalry dispute for the mastery? Intermitted during the Great War, as it used to be called till it found the name by which now we know it, they were never resumed again. The cities, utterly impoverished, overwhelmed with debt, their chief citizens oftentimes chased away, never to return, dragged on for many a long year a feeble existence, which was rather a vegetation than a life, and had no exuberant energies to bestow on contests like these. The whole municipal life, with all the picturesque ceremonial and rich symbolism which the Middle Ages had bequeathed to the modern world, and which in Germany had survived in strength until this time, now vanished for ever. Commerce on a great scale was gone, and did not again return. It had been forced to find out other channels for itself, and there was neither wealth nor spirit in the land to bring it back into those old which it had forsaken.

Then too this entire prostration of the commercial cities, with the ruin of the smaller nobility or landed gentry, left the power of the Electors and smaller princes the only power that survived. There was at once an immense increase of this. The Estates ceased to be

summoned any more, or languished into idlest forms, abdicating all those functions of assemblies of free men which they had hitherto exercised. Not to belong to the Court, not to hold some office from it,—that Court a petty and paltry imitation of the splendour and vices of Versailles, which was now the cynosure of all German eyes,—this was to be nothing in one's own esteem or in the esteem of any other.

Frederick the Great paints in striking colours the moral anarchy to which the Seven Years' War had reduced many districts of Prussia, the taste for licence which the temporary silence of the laws had engendered; the cruel hard-heartedness, the vile greed for gain, and the anarchic disorder which had succeeded to habits of mutual help, equity, and order.* But what could this have been to the moral wreck and ruin on an infinitely vaster stage which the Thirty Years' War must have left behind? It would be little to affirm that one whole generation had grown up amid the worst and wildest savagery which the modern world has seen; for, seeing that the future man is formed between the tenth and twentieth years of life, it would be far more just to affirm that *three* generations had received the stamp and impress of that evil time—high and low equally without

* Carlyle, *History of Frederick the Great*, vol. vi. p. 363.

culture, or the opportunities of culture, for the Universities had been nearly deserted, some of them, as Jena and Helmstadt, absolutely closed during many years of the War, while the village schools during its later years had in many regions, with the village population and the village itself, naturally gone out of existence altogether. The words which Schiller puts into the mouth of young Max. Piccolomini too well describe the joyless youth, the education to all evil things, of such as sprung to manhood in this dreadful time:—

'Life has charms
Which we have ne'er experienced. We have been
But voyaging along its barren coasts,
Like some poor ever-roaming horde of pirates,
That, crowded in the rank and narrow ship,
House on the wild sea with wild usages;
Nor know aught of the mainland, but the bays
Where safeliest they may venture a thieves' landing.
Whate'er in the inland dales the land conceals
Of fair and exquisite, oh! nothing, nothing
Of that do we behold in our rude voyage!'

Three generations might have fitted these words to their lips; if only they, like the speaker, had felt their loss; which, unhappily, was the very thing which for the most part they did not; but rather had grown in love with all which they like him should have abhorred the most. Such had been the education of that remnant of the German people, to whom was

now committed the task of restoring their wrecked and ruined land. Can we wonder if the restoration was slow and imperfect?

And all this shame and loss, this wrath and wrong, this Iliad of woes, Germany had drawn with no sort of necessity upon herself, had bred in her own bosom the monster which devoured her. It was not with her as with some land which could look proudly forth on devastated fields, burned cities, on the graves of her slaughtered children; for all these were the tokens of an heroic endurance, of liberty loved better than the life, won, and not too dearly, at the cost of all these sacrifices, or, even if not won, yet nobly and worthily wooed. Nothing of the kind. It needed only that Protestants and Roman Catholics should have been content to endure one another's nearness, to bear and forbear as they had managed to do for nearly a century, that they should have been content to abide by the compromises of the past, and nothing of all this need have arrived.

The sin, although in unequal proportions, was the sin of all. On Maximilian of Bavaria and on his and the Emperor's Jesuit advisers very much the largest share of this mountain of guilt must rest. But not by any means the whole. The Protestant princes, theologians, people, had all their share in it, and I should

be untrue to my convictions if I did not say, a large share. I speak not now of the loveless temper in which the whole controversy with Rome had been carried on since the Reformation, and this on one side quite as much as the other, the endeavour upon each part to say whatever would gall and provoke the other the most; although the intense embitterment of spirit which was thus created did very much to prepare the way for the War, to make it more hateful while it lasted, and harder to bring to a close. But leaving this aside, one must not shrink from saying of the Protestant Princes, theologians, and people, with many noblest exceptions, that except for their time-serving, manifest unwillingness to dare all for the truth's sake, wretched divisions among themselves, biting and devouring of one another, readiness to forsake the common cause and patch up an ignominious private peace on their own account, the conflict might never have arisen, or having arisen would certainly never have assumed the vast proportions which it did assume, or have endured long enough to acquire for itself in all after history that name of terrible significance, The Thirty Years' War.

And now I will sum up all, so to speak moralize my lecture, by aid of a few verses, evidently drawn from the inmost heart of the

writer, being part of a Thanksgiving Hymn with which that peace, which came so late, and was so weak to heal the hurts which war had left, was yet welcomed by those who had sighed and prayed for it so long:

Friede bauet, Friede richtet,
Krieg zerreisset, Krieg zernichtet;
Friede bringet Muth und Gut,
Kriege bringen Feur und Blut;

Friede stammet aus dem Himmel,
Aus der Höll das Kriegsgetümmel;
Was ist Friede? Gottes Kind;
Was ist Kriegen? Schand und Sünd

THE END.

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